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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Should top CNMI officials agree to a voluntary pay cut as a cost-cutting measure?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

144 DAYS without a government budget for FY 2009

INSIDE

'Bayanihan'

Helping others in their times of greatest need is just one of the many facets of "bayanihan" which continues to hold strong among Filipinos on Saipan.

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Idol Image

Image counts on "American Idol," and the first three finalists know it.

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CUC working to meet requirements of stipulated orders. PAGE 2

Mayor Tudela turns down political offers. PAGE 3

House urges Northwest to reconsider flight cutbacks

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

The House of Representatives has passed a resolution requesting Northwest Airlines to reconsider its decision to reduce the number of flights from Japan to Saipan.

Under H.R. 16-76, the House of Representatives said it would work to create a dialogue between the airlines, the Marianas Visitors Authority, and the Commonwealth Ports Authority "…to find a compromise and feasible solution to prevent further reduction of flights and seats from Japan."

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Permits of 37 garment workers revoked

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Over 20 alien workers of Rifu Apparel went to the Labor Ombudsman's Office yesterday upon learning that their work permits had been revoked after the factory shut down operations on Feb. 6.

The workers proceeded to the Labor Ombudsman's Office in Puerto Rico shortly after Jerry Cody, Labor's administrative hearing officer, conducted a hearing yesterday morning about Rifu's closure and to wrap up lose ends relating

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New atlas shows dying languages around the world

ON THE NET

www.unesco.org/culture/en/endangeredlanguages

By DHEEPTHI NAMASIVAYAM
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

PARIS (AP)—Only one native speaker of Livonian remains on Earth, in Latvia. The Alaskan language Eyak went extinct last year when its last surviving speaker passed away.

Those are just two of the nearly 2,500 languages that UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, says are in danger of becoming extinct or have recently disappeared. That's out of a total of 6,000

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CNMI-Japan Cultural Center officially opens

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The CNMI government, through the collaborative efforts of its various agencies, officially opened to the public yesterday the Northern Marianas-Japan Cultural Center at the Sugar King Estate in Garapan.

Funded by a community development block grant amounting to $600,000, the new center forms part of the third and fourth phases of the Sugar King Park beautification project.

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The *man'amko* entertain the crowd with a dance performance during yesterday's inauguration of the NMI-Japan Cultural Center at Sugar King Park in Garapan. Inset shows acting Gov. Timothy P. Villagomez, fourth from right, leading the ribbon cutting ceremony yesterday. In photo are, from left, the three Miss Liberation Queen winners, Fr. Bong Lopez of San Roque Parish Church, Villagomez, Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela, Keichiro Saeki, who is the grandson of "Sugar King" Haruji Matsue, and Japan Consul to the CNMI Tsutomu Higuchi.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Local

CUC working to meet requirements of stipulated orders

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

KRISTI EATON
Speaking to members of the Legislature yesterday, Bruce Megarr, CUC deputy director for the Water and Sewer Division, shared the status of CUC's compliance with the stipulated orders.

With the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. working against the clock to comply with federal stipulated orders, the utility agency has several projects that need to be completed if it does not want to incur daily fines.

In November, the U.S. Department of Justice and the Environmental Protection Agency filed a civil suit against CUC, claiming the utility agency has committed violations against the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act. The suit was accompanied by two stipulated orders, which means that the CNMI government agreed to the terms and conditions being required of it by the EPA. The requirements set completion dates—some within 30 days—that the utility agency must meet or get fined thousands of dollars each day. The comment period for the orders has ended, but U.S. District Court for the NMI has not signed off on the orders so the time frame has not started yet.

Of the two projects that must be completed within 30 days, one—a schedule of the closing of the Tanapag and Achugao springs—is 90 percent complete and another project—testing for bin classification on the three islands—is 50 percent complete. The testing will cost $100,000, according to a presentation presented to members of the Legislature by Bruce Megarr, CUC deputy director for the Water and Sewer Division, yesterday. Of the projects that must be completed within 90 days, some have been completed. CUC is allowed two years for some projects—such as cleaning the entire sewer pipe system.

According to the presentation, the cost incurred for 2009 to complete the necessary projects is $5.8 million. For 2010, the cost decreases to $3 million and in 2011 it drops to $2.8 million.

The biggest hurdle to meeting the orders is the budget, Megarr said. For fiscal year 2008, revenue was about $6.3 million while expenses were about $9.9 million, a shortfall of $3.6 million. The numbers are unaudited.

Water rates have remained unchanged for the last 15 years and sewage rates have decreased, Megarr said.

The best way to proceed, according to Megarr, is to use the current rate structuring efforts underway by the Georgetown Consulting firm and define the marginal cost of each deliverable.

Mayor Tudela turns down political offers

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

After admitting that a number of political groups had approached him to run in the November elections, Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela confirmed yesterday that he has rejected all offers, which included the position of lieutenant governor, senator, and representative.

"I made the decision not to run for any political post at this time," he told *Saipan Tribune*, adding that the decision was reached after consulting with his family and relatives.

Tudela is in his second and final four-year term as mayor. He also served a term at the House of Representatives and one term at the Board of Education.

"My wish is to retire after this term…so I can have more time with my family," he said.

Tudela admitted, though, that he may reassess his decision after a year of retirement.

"Who knows, I may go back and reassess my political decision after one year? But at this point in time, I am certainly sure of myself. I don't want to run for any public office," he said.

While out of office, the mayor vows to continue assisting the community in whatever way possible for him as a citizen.

When asked why he rejected the offers, Tudela said there are many factors that were considered. "There are a lot of factors and consideration. But the bottom line is, I can still go back to my political plans in the future," he said.

In nearly 15 years in public office, Tudela said he has always won by a landslide. He said he owes this to the trust and confidence the people of Saipan gave him.

Tudela said the job of running a municipality is never easy, taking a serious amount of work, dedication, and perseverance. Besides road improvements and beautification projects, the mayor also administers important programs such as the Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance.

Tudela was also instrumental in bringing in Japanese students through the NMI-Japan Cultural Exchange programs where hundreds of students were given the opportunity to travel here and in Japan.

Tudela's office is also responsible for one of the biggest community events every year, the Liberation Day.

"There are several good programs under the office…and I want my successor to fulfill and continue them," the mayor said.

Bangladeshi community marks National Language Day today

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Over a hundred members of the Bangladeshi community on Saipan are expected to join their nation in celebrating their national language today.

In 2000, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declared Feb. 21 International Mother Language Day for the whole world to celebrate, in tribute to those who sacrificed their lives for the Bengali Language Movement and the ethno-linguistic rights of people around the world.

The Bengali Language Movement was a political effort in Bangladesh (then known as East Pakistan), advocating the recognition of the Bengali language as an official language of Pakistan.

Rakibul Islam Mintu, organizer of the Saipan Bangladesh Cultural Group, yesterday invited members of the Bangladesh community to take part in a prayer at the Garapan central mosque at 8:30pm today.

The prayer will be followed by a cultural program at his former shop beside Bank of Saipan in Garapan.

"This event is important because we remember those who died for the language movement," Mintu said.

On Feb. 21, 1952, students of the University of Dhaka and other political activities defied the Pakistan government's ban on public meetings and rallies by organizing a protest. The movement reached its climax when police killed student demonstrators on that day.

The deaths provoked widespread civil unrest led by the Awami Muslim League, later renamed the Awami League. After years of conflict, the central government relented and granted official status to the Bengali language in 1956, until the UNESCO's declaration of Feb. 21 as International Mother Language Day.

Mintu said the Bangladesh community has seen a decrease in numbers in recent years but he said this should not dampen the spirit of the national language celebration.

CPA extends eviction notice of Rota company

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority on Thursday extended its eviction notice to Rota Terminal and Transfer Co. Inc. for 30 more days to give way to a settlement discussion with the company.

RT&T was given until March 13 to vacate the CPA property if a settlement is not reached between the two parties.

The ports authority earlier terminated its lease agreement with the company after it failed to pay rent and fees, amounting to $400,704 as of November 2008. The amount excludes interests, costs, and expenses incurred by CPA in collecting the account.

CPA executive director Efrain S. Camacho disclosed that after receiving the eviction notice on Feb. 13, RT&T asked the ports authority for a meeting.

Camacho said its owner, Rep. Victor Hocog, also submitted a proposal to reduce the space rental and a five-year repayment plan for his company's arrears.

Camacho said CPA is open to negotiations with Hocog's firm but can't say if the agency is willing to grant the requests.

"The extension was made to give the company the opportunity to meet with CPA and evaluate things on or before March 13," Camacho told *Saipan Tribune*.

CPA disclosed the lawmaker's company earlier ignored numerous attempts by the agency to collect and negotiate with them. RT&T repeatedly failed to cure the default and pay the amount owing and even neglected to contact CPA regarding any payment option, according to the agency.

Camacho said its lease agreement with the firm was executed in January 1996, but has not been fulfilled since then.

The company was supposed to vacate the facility last Feb. 13.

Camacho said the management is evaluating stevedoring requirements on Rota, given that RT&T may not be in operation in the future.

"RT&T was given up to March 13 to settle its account with CPA. In the meantime, shippers have been advised to break cargoes down as the land based crane may not be available," Camacho said.

He said GPPC Inc. has expressed its concern about possible disruption to this project and has indicated its interest in helping out with the stevedoring.

CPA, Camacho said, has requested GPPC to submit a proposal.

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Tinian Chamber of Commerce revived, Mendiola-Long is named new president

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

After years of inactivity, the Tinian Chamber of Commerce is back in business to help voice out Tinian's concerns on the impact of a federal immigration system on the economy, the consequences of military activities, and follow up on the status of capital improvement projects on the island, among other things.

Yesterday, 19 business representatives elected Phillip Mendiola-Long, executive vice president of Bridge Investment Group-CNMI, as the 2009 president of the Tinian Chamber of Commerce.

"The importance of reviving the Tinian Chamber of Commerce is because the CNMI is facing massive governmental and economic changes that require a cohesive message from the business community," Mendiola-Long told Saipan Tribune.

He said if ideas and concerns are not funneled through a single organization, such as a chamber of commerce, the messages could be diluted or misinterpreted by the receiver.

"We felt that, especially with the military and the federal government's lack of attention to the outer islands, it was important to voice our frustrations while offering practical solutions to a process that, for now, doesn't seem to recognize the Tinian community as stakeholders," he added.

While only 19 showed up at yesterday's first meeting, the Chamber received a total membership of almost 30, Mendiola-Long said.

2009 officers

Don Farrell, a former president of the Tinian Chamber of Commerce, conducted yesterday's meeting but requested not to be nominated to office due to other obligations.

The following officers were elected:

■ Philip Mendiola-Long, president, representing Bridge Investment Group and Sherman Worldwide;

■ Don J. Power, vice president, representing FPA Inc. and Tinian Ice and Water;

■ Allen Perez, secretary and treasurer, representing Susan's Creations;

■ Reid Ellis, board member, representing Grace Christian Academy;

■ Jose P. Cruz, board member, representing Silves-Jem's BBQ Garden; and

■ Jeff Barr, board member, representing Telesource CNMI.

Priorities

Mendiola-Long said priorities for the Tinian Chamber of Commerce will be established by majority of members in a series of meetings where several issues will be discussed.

He said these include the impacts of a federal immigration system and another increase in minimum wage, the status of Tinian capital improvement projects and how to get those projects moving, access to federal grants, and doing business with the federal government via Guam/Small Business Administration trainings on Tinian.

Other issues expected to be tackled are working on policy changes for streamlining government bureaucracy, working with the Legislature on drafting business friendly legislation, working with the government to identify areas where the U.S. stimulus and housing bailout programs can help Tinian, and looking at free trade with Guam.

Mendiola-Long said at this point, the Chamber is trying to get the community to understand the implications of a federal immigration system on Tinian.

He took issue with the only 13 individuals and groups that so far submitted comments on the interim final regulations on the establishment of U.S. ports of entry in the CNMI and the implementation of the Guam-CNMI visa waiver program.

"Thirteen comments will not resonate with the powers-that-be," he said in a phone interview.

Tinian saw many businesses leaving the island due to the downturn in visitor arrivals, especially with the pullout of Japan Airlines.

"The silver lining has been that both Korea and China have been the major contributors to saving the Tinian tourism economy from total collapse. Now that China will be taken away, and the Korean economy shrinking, Tinian is faced with the very near possibility of a loss of 80 percent of its entire visitor market. Therefore, it is imperative that the business community stand together and do whatever possible to protect what little market we have left in order for the economy to survive," Mendiola-Long added.

Tinian's gaming industry relies heavily on Chinese tourists, who, along with Russian tourists, will be required to secure U.S. visas before entering the CNMI beginning June 1 unless the transition to a federal immigration system is delayed.

NEW ATLAS

From Page 1

world languages.

In a presentation Thursday of a new world atlas of endangered languages, linguists stressed the list is not restricted to small or far-flung countries. They also sought to encourage immigrants to treasure their native languages.

"Language endangerment is a universal phenomenon," said Christopher Moseley, an Australian linguist who edited the atlas' third edition, which is to appear in digital and paper versions.

The atlas says 200 languages have become extinct in the last three generations, and another 199 languages have fewer than 10 speakers left.

More than a fourth of the 192 languages once spoken in the United States have disappeared. Another 71 are severely endangered, according to the atlas.

There is Gros Ventre, spoken by fewer than 10 people in north-central Montana. All are elderly, and none is fully fluent. The last fully fluent speaker died in 1981.

Or Menomonee, spoken in northeast Wisconsin, with just 35 speakers left.

The digital version of the atlas invites users to contribute with updates and allows them to search according to country, degree of endangerment, name of languages or by number of speakers.

Type in Russia, and color-coded flags appear ranging from white (unsafe)—denoting languages such as Lezgian, spoken in the Caucasus Mountains—to red (critically endangered), marking those such as the Tundra Enets, spoken in Arctic islands.

Not all is bleak, however. Some endangered languages, like Latvia's Livonian, are being revived by young people and through poetry.

CNMI-JAPAN

From Page 1

Speaking before members of the community and guests, acting Gov. Timothy Villagomez said he is pleased to join other luminaries in unveiling the new historical and tourist site. He cited the valuable contributions of King Haruji Matsue to the CNMI and honored the latter's grandson, Keichiro Saeki, who served as the event's guest of honor.

"Here, in this park, we can reflect on the history of our islands during the Japanese administration from about 1914 to 1944. We can see the statue of the Sugar King, Haruji Matsue, who developed our island's first major industry. We can also see displays of Japanese culture, which has had strong cultural and historical influences on our islands and peoples. …This park supports our local tourism industry. It is truly an attraction to our visitors and a place for reflection, relaxation, and recreation for our local residents," Villagomez said.

He said the Sugar King Park supports and blends aspects of tourism, history, culture, and recreation.

Villagomez lauded the commitment of the Saipan Mayor's Office and the Northern Marianas Housing Corp. to improve the park.

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela believes the redevelopment of the park would serve as one of his legacies. Tudela is in his last term as mayor.

"I am honored and privileged to present this project to the community as a living legacy to the people of Saipan and the Commonwealth in recognition of our budding indigenous entrepreneurs working side-by-side with a Japanese entrepreneur named Haruji Matsue," the mayor said.

Tudela recalled that Garapan was a thriving town for business and commerce during the Japanese era.

It was on Oct. 2, 2002, when the Legislature adopted a resolution requesting the administration to support the revitalization of the famed Sugar King estate in central Garapan. A year later, during the first economic summit in Tokyo, Japan, in 2003, the MPLA board approved the designation of the estate, vesting the Saipan Mayor's Office with the responsibility of developing, operating, and maintaining the estate grounds for the cultural center.

"The vision seven years ago is now a reality…and a cause for celebration for our generation and generations to come," Tudela said.

While the park celebrates the CNMI's relationship with Japan, NMHC director Joshua Sasamoto said it also serves as an unwavering bastion of perseverance, stability, and hope in these times of uncertainty and anxiety as the Commonwealth enters another significant phase in its progress as a U.S. commonwealth.

"Let it serve as a reminder that we have a rich and storied history that we are constantly writing and that we can overcome any adversity when we unite and are inclusive and celebrate all that uniquely belongs to us in order to distinctly recognize that, although times are difficult on an unprecedented level, there is always much to be thankful and happy for," Sasamoto said.

PERMITS

From Page 1

to wages possibly owed the workers.

Cody instructed the workers to return next Friday to get a copy of the administrative order that he is expected to issue on that day.

Last Feb. 9, Labor director Barry Hirsbein opened a compliance agency case after finding that Rifu had ceased its garment manufacturing operations on Feb. 6. The case was intended to arrange for the orderly transfer of all affected alien workers who hold valid work permits.

That same day, Feb. 9, Labor administrative hearing officer Herbert Soll revoked the work permits of the 37 alien workers, effective on the day of the closure.

Soll granted each worker relief to transfer to other employers. He required the workers interested in seeking new employers to register with Labor's Employment Services no later than Feb. 26.

Saipan Tribune learned that over 30 Rifu employees, mostly Chinese, attended yesterday's hearing at Labor. After the hearing, over 20 of them proceeded to the Ombudsman's Office at 11am. The workers finished talking with the Ombudsman's Office at 2:45pm. They did not eat lunch and consumed only bottled water.

One worker told Saipan Tribune that they went to the Ombudsman's Office because they did not understand what was happening at Labor as there was no interpreter. Saipan Tribune checked with Labor yesterday and found out that there was indeed an interpreter during the proceedings.

The worker said that Rifu's general manager, Kidong Choi, had informed Labor on Nov. 19, 2008, that apparently due to a delay in the confirmation of orders from buyers, there would be no production activities at the San Vicente factory starting that week until the first week of March 2009. However, the worker said, Choi told Labor that workers should continue reporting to the factory as they will still be paid.

Showing a document, the worker said the management's last payment to the workers was on Dec. 6.

"Labor gave us a chance to transfer. But where is our money? First we were told it was only a temporary closure; now it's permanent closure. That's why we think it is unfair," she said.

Another worker said they have not received their salaries for two months now.

"It's very hard. My husband already went to China because there's no job. But I'm six months pregnant and have to undergo monthly checkups in the hospital," the worker said.

Office of Insular Affairs field representative Jeffrey Schorr, who was seen by *Saipan Tribune* listening to the workers, said he just visited the Ombudsman's Office to find out what's going on.

"My understanding is that this is just a follow up on the hearing that the case workers are handling. As I heard, they're going to be following up for the workers on an order that's coming out next week and they are going to get back together and explain things," said Schorr. "My understanding is that they did not understand what was going on. And most of the questions that are being translated were for clarification purposes. We have to find out what the problem is first."

Schorr has been keeping an eye of the Ombudsman's Office as no one has been designated federal ombudsman since the resignation of James Benedetto last year.

HOUSE

From Page 1

Northwest Airlines recently announced it would cease its daytime flights from Osaka and cease its nighttime flights from Narita at the end of May. Daytime services from Narita will also see a reduction of 116 seats.

Based on a 75 percent load factor, the CNMI stands to lose $51 million and $168 million in direct and indirect opportunity for fiscal year 2009, the resolution stated. If unable to recover the loss of the air seats, the Commonwealth stands to lose an annual $108 million and $356 million in direct and indirect revenue.

Moreover, with such a decline the CNMI stands to lose 1,383 public and 1,546 private jobs "creating detrimental and extremely devastating effects to the already frail economy of the CNMI."

And with the tourism market standing to lose the Chinese and Russian markets due to the new visa waiver regulations requiring tourists from those countries to enter with a visa, the Japanese market is more important to the Commonwealth than ever, the resolution stated.

During the House session this week, other members assured Rep. Tina Sablan that the CNMI government has already begun a dialogue and discussion with the airline. Sablan said she felt the resolution was asking the airline to feel sorry for the CNMI.

"What are we going to offer? Are we just asking them to feel sorry for us?" she said.

Rep. Diego Benavente, who authored the resolution, said the House is limited to what it can offer, but wanted to show support for the dialogue and negotiations.

Once Sablan was assured the resolution was meant to show support for a dialogue, she voted in favor of the measure.

"I am absolutely supportive of trying to work out a solution that will meet the needs of both the airline and the community," she said yesterday.

NMC, two student leaders settle 'issue'

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The possible ouster from their posts of two student leaders at the Northern Marianas College has been resolved after the college admitted misinterpreting a provision in the Associated Students of NMC Constitution relating to the grade requirement for student leaders.

ASNMC president Ivan Mereb disclosed this yesterday after his final State of the Association Address on campus.

Mereb, along with treasurer Lena Wabol, were earlier asked to step down from their posts due to the required minimum GPA requirement cited in the constitution. For a student to be able to run for a position at the college, he/she must meet a 3.0 cumulative GPA in a year and must maintain a minimum of 2.75 GPA in a semester period.

"Our issue has been settled and resolved. A meeting was held last week between management and us, along with our adviser. After carefully reviewing the ASNMC Constitution, it was found out that there was no valid point in asking us to step down…so there was some sort of 'misinterpretation and misunderstanding' on what was written in the constitution," Mereb said.

Mereb, speaking before 58 students yesterday, talked about the need to amend the student constitution. The constitution, he said, was crafted in 2002 and needs some changes and modifications.

"The next set of student leaders will make it happen. We recognize the need to update the ASNMC Constitution to give clear mandates and protection to students," Mereb said, adding that this will prevent "misinterpretations" in the future.

The State of the Association Address is held thrice every year to enable the ASNMC president to report to the studentry.

Mereb, who is in his last term in office, was earlier commended by the Board of Regents for his active participation in every board assembly and his participation in student programs and activities.

During yesterday's assembly, Mereb updated his colleagues on the 2009 student initiatives, the upcoming Charter Day celebration, and this year's graduation.

At present, Mereb said the number of graduating students have yet to be finalized as many are still submitting their petitions.

For the election of new officers, Mereb said aspirants to the positions are now taking some training and guidance from incumbent leaders.

Citing the importance of keeping the college's accreditation, Mereb asked the students for their unity and cooperation.

He disclosed that ASNMC will hold extensive discussions on other student issues to prevent them from going out of control.

Acting supt. is named for War in the Pacific National Park

Steve Gibbons will serve as acting superintendent of War in the Pacific National Historical Park beginning in February 20, 2009. He will serve at the park on Guam while the National Park Service (NPS) recruits for a permanent superintendent. Gibbons follows Sarah Creachbaum who transferred to the superintendency of Haleakala National Park on Maui, Hawaii.

Gibbons, a 26-year employee of the NPS, coordinates the National Natural Landmark, Threatened and Endangered Species, and Research Natural Area programs for the NPS in the Pacific West Region, including Guam.

Gibbons

"I have great confidence in Steve," said NPS Regional Director Jonathan B. Jarvis. "He demonstrates leadership and confidence to his employees and park friends."

Gibbons has served as an acting superintendent before when he worked for 6 months at Kalaupapa National Historical Park.

"I am enthusiastic about working on Guam and Saipan," Gibbons said. "I want to continue the warm relations with our NPS partners."

The superintendent of War in the Pacific National Historical Park in the Territory of Guam also serves as the park manager for American Memorial Park on the island of Saipan in the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas. Both War in the Pacific NHP and American Memorial Park contain some of the finest remains of World War II in the National Park System. ***(PR)***

Woman falls in 'ice' buy-bust operation

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Police arrested during a buy-bust operation Wednesday a suspected supplier of methamphetamine hydrochloride or "ice."

Yin Juan Sheng, 38, a Chinese female, was brought to the Superior Court yesterday on charges of trafficking of a controlled substance and illegal possession of a controlled substance.

Associate Judge David A. Wiseman ordered Sheng to hire her own lawyer after she disclosed that she has a $10,000 in her bank account.

Wiseman imposed a $30,000 cash bail for the defendant's temporary release and set the preliminary hearing for Feb. 27 at 9am.

Detective Norman Alvin S. Rasiang stated in his report that police officers used a "cooperating source" to purchase a total of $400 worth of "ice" from Sheng on three occasions.

Rasiang said that last Jan. 27, the police's "cooperating source" bought $100 worth of "ice" from Sheng in Chalan Piao.

On Feb. 11, police officers, using the same "cooperating source," purchased another $100 worth of "ice" from the defendant in Chalan Kanoa District 4.

Last Wednesday, police officers tapped the same "cooperating source" and an undercover officer to conduct the buy-bust.

After the transaction at a motel in San Jose, police officers placed the suspect under arrest.

Rasiang said the substance purchased from the defendant in the three deals is presumptive positive for "ice."

Mariana Islands Range Complex Draft EIS/OEIS Available for Public Comment Jan. 30, 2009 – March 16, 2009

On behalf of the U.S. Defense Representative Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Republic of Palau, the U.S. Navy has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) for the Mariana Islands Range Complex. The Draft EIS/OEIS is available for public comment through March 16, 2009.

Where to get the EIS/OEIS: Visit www.MarianasRangeComplexEIS.com to download the document or to find a library that has a copy.

The U.S. Defense Representative Wants Your Input!

The U.S. Defense Representative is hosting open house sessions and public hearings to receive oral or written comments on the Draft EIS/OEIS.

Where to submit comments:

Submit comments via the online form at www.MarianasRangeComplexEIS.com or send written comments via postal mail or e-mail to:

Mariana Islands Range Complex EIS
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Attn: EV2
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134
E-mail: marianas.tap.eis@navy.mil

All comments must be postmarked by March 16, 2009.

Proposed Action

The U.S. Defense Representative proposes to support and conduct current, emerging and future training and research, development, test and evaluation training activities in the Mariana Islands Study Area. Three alternatives are analyzed in the Draft EIS/OEIS. Under the No Action Alternative, military activities would continue at current levels. Alternatives 1 and 2 propose increases in military activity and the number and types of training events, and enhancements to range capabilities. Alternative 2 also proposes new activities related to additional Major Exercises.

Open House Sessions & Public Hearings
Open House: 5 - 9 p.m.
Public Hearing: 7 - 9 p.m.

Guam:
February 19, 2009
Jesus & Eugenia Leon Guerrero School of Business and Public Administration Building
The Anthony Leon Guerrero Multi-Purpose Room 129
University of Guam
Mangilao, Guam 96923

Guam:
February 20, 2009
Southern High School Cafeteria
#1 Jose Perez Leon Guerrero Drive
Santa Rita, Guam 96915

Saipan:
February 23, 2009
Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe

Tinian:
February 24, 2009
Tinian Elementary School Cafeteria
San Jose Village
Tinian, MP 96952

Rota:
February 26, 2009
Sinapolo Elementary School Cafeteria
Sinapolo I

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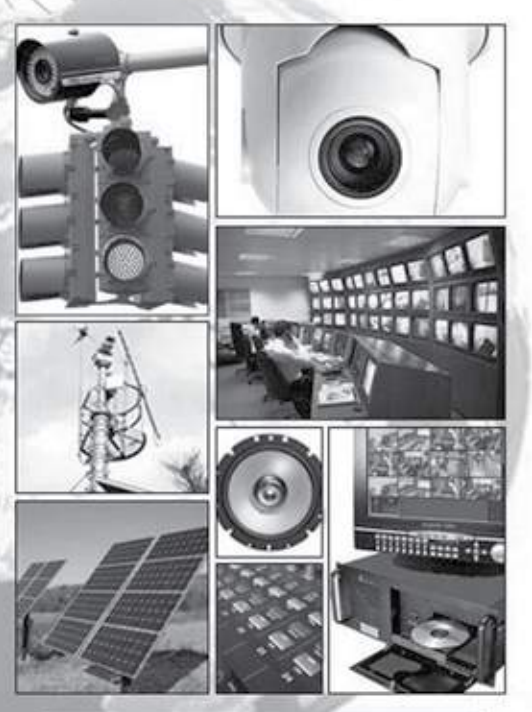

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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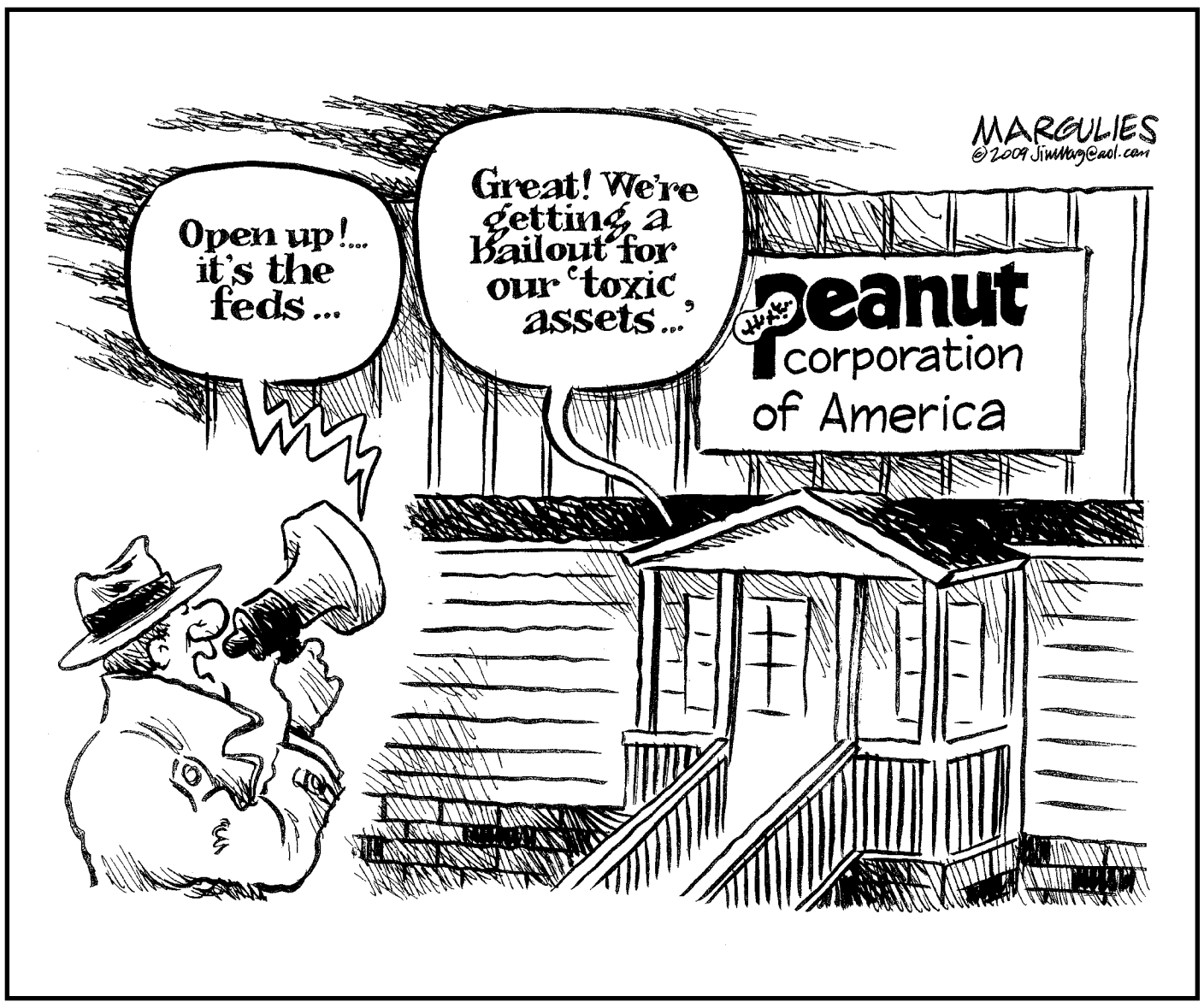
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Peanut Corporation of America

EDITORIAL

Against the tide

Any plan to shore up the U.S. housing market and prevent foreclosures confronts a basic dilemma. To maximize a plan's effectiveness, the government must confer significant benefits on a large number of homeowners. To maximize fairness and conserve funds, the government must NOT confer benefits on anyone who doesn't really need or deserve help, or on those who will default even on more generous mortgages. In confronting this trade-off, President Obama is no different from the many others before him—President George W. Bush, various members of Congress and countless economists—who have tried to devise a solution. This week, Mr. Obama argued that his new Homeowner Affordability and Stability Plan will be comprehensive enough to protect neighborhoods across the country from the negative consequences of foreclosures. At the same time, he said, the plan "focuses on rescuing families who have played by the rules and acted responsibly."

Will it succeed? The plan would permit Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, newly fortified with a $200 billion capital infusion, to modify mortgages for homeowners who owe between 80 and 105 percent of the market value of their houses. Additionally, using $75 billion derived mostly from the Treasury Department's financial bailout fund, Mr. Obama is offering subsidies to loan servicers—plus cash incentives of as much as $1,000 per mortgage—to reduce monthly payments to as low as 31 percent of a borrower's income. Borrowers would be eligible for up to $5,000 if they managed to stay current on their modified loans for five years. Combined, these measures could help 7 million to 9 million homeowners refinance and save hundreds or thousands of dollars per year, thus reducing their chances of foreclosure, the administration says.

The plan wisely focuses on preventing salvageable mortgages from going bad, rather than promising a lifeline to every subprime borrower. It is also an improvement over past efforts in that it offers servicers an incentive to rewrite loans; this might spur some to overcome mortgage-security investors' resistance to modifications. J.P. Morgan Chase chief executive Jamie Dimon said this week that the plan could help his company rewrite more than a million mortgages.

In tailoring his plan to those deemed most deserving and capable, Mr. Obama necessarily reduced its potential impact. Also, the benefits it provides could turn out to be relatively modest, depending on each borrower's situation. More and more people are facing foreclosure not because they took out subprime loans with unaffordable interest "resets" but because they lost their jobs and can't pay mortgages of any kind. Their monthly payments in many cases account for well above 50 percent of their monthly incomes. Yet, under the Obama plan, lenders would have to reduce that ratio to 38 percent before the government subsidy kicks in. And the subsidy would be limited to half the cost of lowering the ratio from 38 percent to 31 percent. On many loans, that simply won't be a better deal (for the lender) than foreclosure.

And, of course, homeowners may default on even dramatically cheaper loans if they suddenly lose their jobs—notwithstanding the Obama plan's incentives for them to stay current. Bank of America, for example, already has a program to reduce borrowers' payment burdens to 34 percent of income. But, as The Post's Renae Merle recently reported, many redefaulted when they became unemployed. Moments after Mr. Obama finished his speech, the president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago forecast that unemployment will continue to rise

See AGAINST on Next Page

We need a bailout too

By ROSA BROOKS
Special to the Los Angeles Times

Brooks is a professor at the Georgetown University Law Center. E-mail Brooks at rbrooks@latimescolumnists.com.

Brother, can you spare $22 billion?

Back in the Great Depression, the song "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?" epitomized all the hurt that was going around:

Once I built a railroad, I made it run, made it race against time.

Once I built a railroad; now it's done. Brother, can you spare a dime?

There's been some inflation since the 1930s. Today's panhandlers don't humbly ask passersby for a dime. Instead, they go to Congress and ask for a spare $22 billion or so.

That's what General Motors and Chrysler demanded Tuesday on Capitol Hill, in a form of panhandling that felt more like a stickup: "Give us another $22 billion or hundreds of thousands of autoworkers get the ax!"

If the iconic images of the Depression were of individuals—a scruffy child in castoff clothes, a hollow-eyed mother in a bread line—the iconic image of the current economic crisis is likely to be that of the ravenous corporation insisting, every month or so, it needs just a few billion dollars more.

It's not that the crisis has produced no needy individuals. Early indicators suggest a sharp rise in hunger, homelessness and every variety of human suffering. But don't think Congress is going to hand out huge wads of cash to the hungry or the newly homeless. In America, we only bail out banks and big corporations.

It's a sorry truth of modern human psychology that the more you already have, the more people will give you. In a classic experiment, well-dressed researchers posed as commuters who had lost their wallets and asked passersby for $20 to buy a train ticket home. Complete strangers gladly parted with large sums. In contrast, when the same researchers posed as homeless people asking for money to buy food, most either got a rude brushoff or loose change.

The same holds true for charitable giving. Most philanthropic money goes to institutions that are already wealthy (universities with large endowments, for instance) or arts organizations with largely affluent "clients." Only a tiny fraction goes to organizations that provide social services to the needy.

Apparently taking these insights to heart, many of the nation's largest corporations and banks continue to hit up the government for trillions in taxpayer dollars. No surprise that they're mostly getting what they ask for. So far, the government (that means you, girls and boys!) is on the hook for an estimated $8.7 trillion in assorted bailouts. There's $700 billion for the TARP, $300 billion for Citigroup, $17.4 billion already handed out to automakers, plus a lot of other bailout programs, most of which you've probably never heard of.

As they say on the Hill, "a billion here, a billion there ... pretty soon you're talking about real money." How real? That $8.7 trillion is more than the U.S. government spent on the Louisiana Purchase, the New Deal, World War II, the Marshall Plan and the Vietnam War—combined.

The theory is that bailing out banks, the auto industry and other corporate giants will trickle down to the rest of us.

Too bad it doesn't seem to be working. Those bank loans that were supposed to start flowing as a result of the TARP? They didn't. The 20 biggest banks that received federal bailout funds gave out, on average, less mortgage and business loan money in the last quarter of 2008 than in previous quarters. Credit-card lending was up slightly, but those same banks also jacked up interest rates. And there's little comfort for those concerned about their retirement funds: On Tuesday, the Dow plummeted to pre-bailout levels.

Don't expect the auto industry bailout to produce better results. Detroit was in trouble before the economic crisis began because it couldn't produce reliable, efficient cars that people actually wanted to buy. Its restructuring proposals do little to change that. The bailouts seem to be so much taxpayer money going into a black hole, and the business plans the companies filed Tuesday anticipate that they'll need billions more.

What if the government focused on bailing out ordinary Americans instead? Divvy up the $8.7-trillion estimated bailout price tag and Uncle Sam could send every single household a check for nearly $80,000. Who knows—maybe ordinary Americans would have put that money to good use, buying goods, starting businesses, sending kids to college.

I know, that's just a naive fantasy. Unlike the American bank, the American family isn't "too big to fail." So let's keep giving handouts to those downtrodden banks and corporations, and work on some updated lyrics to the old song:

Once I built a bank, it was such fun—sold credit default swaps by the million.

Once I built a bank; now it's done. Brother, can you spare a billion?

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

My father's Chevrolets

By JEANNE MCMANUS
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

If ever there was a good idea gone bad, an American icon destroyed, a trust betrayed, it has to be Chevrolet. It took only one 1951 Ford to make my father a Chevy man for life. One summer day in 1952 Dad went off to Chevy Chase Chevrolet, unannounced, and traded in the Ford for a Chevrolet "tin woodie" station wagon, dark brown with a tailgate that flapped down, a rear window that sprang up and a third seat in the back that folded flat, though the car was so often filled with kids that it was rarely in that position. That day, my mother cried in front of her four children for the first time any of us could remember.

Mom thought the car was an extravagance, and it probably was, with a fresh mortgage on a three-bedroom, one-bath house in Washington. Though Dad was in many ways infinitely practical, not in need of luxury, he had his weaknesses, and a new Chevy was at the top of the list.

How could the company that once forged Dad's dreams from metal become the same General Motors that is now begging for billions in government assistance?

That first Chevy station wagon, most often with Mom behind the wheel, hauled us off to daily obligations—school, church, Boy Scouts, Brownies—but never was it more valuable than on our annual trek to Bethany Beach. Into the back of that car Dad managed to stuff the sheets, towels, bathing suits, coolers, beach umbrella and summer clothes that Mom had packed for our two- or sometimes four-week stay. It was a badge of pride to Dad that he not resort to tying suitcases to the roof. To his pleasure, the Chevy could absorb the load.

That brown station wagon disappeared as suddenly as it arrived. This time, Mom, sensing a pattern, did not cry when Dad drove up in the 1957 Chevrolet station wagon, a kind of creamy yellow with white tail fins. None of us liked the color. But this was back when families were benign dictatorships, not democracies, and so we kept our mouths shut.

By then my older sister and I were in the Girl Scouts, and every Saturday we took ice skating lessons. Mom volunteered too often to be one of the carpool drivers hauling half of a troop, and another mother, in another station wagon, took the other half. One Saturday morning when the inevitable happened—a girl fell and split her lip—the other mother took the injured girl to the hospital and Mom took home the entire troop in the '57 wagon—17 of us, all in circular skirts, with skates, coats, hats and mittens.

Looking back now, I see that the next Chevy was clearly Dad's midlife-crisis car, though I don't think the term had been invented yet. By 1961, he had three teen-agers, and that's enough to make any man trade in the station wagon for a 1961 Impala convertible—white with a red interior and a red stripe on the more modified fin. Again, the color: Dad? White?

Still, though I was not yet old enough to drive, I couldn't wait to get my hands on that car. Neither could my girlfriends. While Mom and Dad were at a Redskins game one brilliant autumn afternoon, my gang of friends and I, headed by Peggy, the only one of us who had a license, took the Impala for a joy ride, all the while listening to the game to make sure we got the car back in time. (Sorry, Mom!)

Second cars soon joined the family car. We had not one but two Corvairs (one of the darlings of Ralph Nader's "Unsafe at Any Speed") and a Malibu. One year, Dad went off radar and bought a little Renault, but it always sounded like a whirring fan, the turn signals were the opposite of the Chevy ("left is up and right is down," we sang to remind Mom), and it rusted out pretty quickly.

When in 1972 I finally had enough money to buy my own car, I knew it was going to be a VW bug. Dad insisted that we test-drive one. Of course, according to him, everything about it was wrong. To be honest, my dad, a veteran of World War II, found it hard to see his daughter in a German car.

Inexorably, we wound up at Chevy Chase Chevrolet with me driving off the lot in a 1972 Chevrolet Vega.

That thing overheated on a lonely mountain road in Vermont at 5 in the morning. It overheated on the Chesapeake Bay Bridge on a Sunday afternoon in July. At one point, the only way I could ensure that it would start in the morning was to set my alarm for 3 a.m., go outside in my pajamas, turn it over, warm it up, turn it off, then go back to bed. When in 1979 I bought a Honda Civic, the dealer wouldn't even take the Vega in a trade.

A year later my husband and I drove it into a gas station in Rappahannock County, parked it over to the side where cars awaited servicing, took off the license plates and quietly drove off in the Civic. We saw it there for a while afterward; eventually it disappeared.

Jeanne McManus is a former Post *editor.*

Giving science a bad name

By JENNIFER L. MNOOKIN
SPECIAL TO THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

On television shows such as the "CSI" series, forensic science is high-tech, heroic and always right. The National Academy of Sciences released a long-anticipated report Wednesday on the real world of forensic science—and the news is disturbing and downright ugly. Laboratories are woefully underfunded, and much of what passes for forensic "science" does not meet even minimal scientific standards. Yet, when forensic scientists testify in court, they often are embarrassingly overconfident about their findings.

The academy's report, commissioned by Congress and the result of years of investigation by a distinguished panel of independent experts, does not mince words in its indictment of the scanty research foundation upon which much forensic science now stands. The report asserts that "the current situation" is "seriously wanting, both because of the limitations of the judicial system and because of the many problems faced by the forensic science community." It also calls for the urgent creation of a federal agency devoted to encouraging research and to providing much-needed regulation and oversight.

Put simply, although many kinds of forensic testimony—involving handwriting identification, fingerprint evidence and ballistics, for example—are enormously persuasive to a typical jury, they do not meet the basic requirements of good science.

But we don't need to wait for a new agency to make the necessary changes. Judges, who preside over the presentation of this evidence, need to exercise their role as gatekeepers to protect the integrity of our criminal justice system by requiring higher standards for forensic science when it's used as legal evidence.

What did the study's authors identify as some of the most significant problems?

Bias: Doctors testing a new medicine are—appropriately—not told which patients receive placebos and which get the test medication, because that knowledge might unconsciously bias their behavior and observations. But forensic scientists are frequently exposed to information that can potentially foster bias. Crime laboratories have failed to create adequate procedures for making testing "blind."

Error rates: Most of the forensic disciplines lack good information about how often practitioners make mistakes, a basic requirement of any science. Not knowing the error rate is bad enough, but some experts consistently testify under oath that their technique has an error rate of zero, an inherently preposterous claim.

No one really knows just how often document examiners incorrectly analyze handwriting samples, how frequently arson investigators get the cause of a fire wrong or how often forensic odontologists misidentify bite marks. Yet anecdotal information and research suggest that errors are disturbingly frequent. University of Virginia law professor Brandon Garrett's 2008 study of the first 200 convicted defendants exonerated by DNA evidence, for example, found that faulty forensic science testimony was second only to erroneous eyewitness identification as a cause of miscarriages of justice.

Over-claiming: Science deals in probabilities, not certainty. The only forensic science that makes regular use of formal probabilities is DNA profiling, in which experts testify to the probability of a match. None of the rest of the traditional pattern-identification sciences—such as fingerprinting, ballistics, fiber and handwriting analysis—currently has the necessary statistical foundation to establish accurate probabilities. Yet, instead of acknowledging their imperfect knowledge, fingerprint experts, for example, routinely testify that they can identify a specific person's prints to the exclusion of all other people with 100 percent certainty. In 2004, the FBI, often said to have the nation's best crime lab, wrongly identified Oregon attorney Brandon Mayfield as a terrorist based on an erroneous fingerprint match. It eventually admitted its error, and the government had to pay him $2 million. There are hundreds of less adequate labs. How much confidence can we have in them?

Structural independence: When the police and prosecutors pay and supervise the scientists, it stands to reason that the scientists might have difficulty establishing their independence. The courts have almost entirely turned a deaf ear to these arguments, essentially giving forensic science and its practices a free pass, simply because they've been part of the judicial system for so long. Meanwhile, scandals continue to come to light across the nation involving error and even fraud in labs.

The findings in the National Academy of Sciences report should spur judges to require higher standards. At a bare minimum, judges should immediately prohibit experts from testifying to impossibilities such as "an error rate of zero" or asserting that they are capable of making 100 percent certain identifications.

In other cases, judges would be well advised to throw out forensic science altogether—not forever but until adequate research establishes, for example, that the conventional wisdom about evidence of arson is empirically valid, or until fingerprint and ballistics experts provide adequate proof that their real-world error rate is reasonably low. Courts should require forensic experts to back up their testimony with empirical evidence that they can do what they claim to be able to do.

We want and need forensic science in our legal system, but we have to be able to trust it. The forensic science community has been, at best, wary of, and often downright hostile to, serious inquiry into its strengths and limitations, especially by objective external researchers.

But if judges raised their standards and limited or excluded forensic evidence that didn't meet them, that fortress mentality would inevitably change. This much-needed research probably would reveal that forensic science is not as perfect as its practitioners have claimed. But when forensic science rests on an appropriate scientific foundation, it will be far more deserving of our confidence. Our system of justice demands no less.

Mnookin is a professor and vice dean at the University of California, Los Angeles Law School.

AGAINST

From Page 10

through the middle of next year.

The bottom line is that Mr. Obama has negotiated the trade-offs cautiously. His plan offers more relief than previous programs, and targets it. Cutting some homeowners' borrowing costs could help them stay in their homes as long as they still have work. The plan pushes back against the recessionary tide. But that tide is still rising.

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Letter to the Editor

Thank you for the help

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all the people, organizations, and individual who extended their helping hand during our campaign donation drive for the late Geraldine Amor who passed away two days after arriving in the Philippines from Saipan. Amor was confined at CHC's ICU because of her illness that was diagnosed as Lupus, a disease that affects the internal organs. To the entire Filipino community of Saipan and non-Filipino donors, thank you for your humanitarian act and support to a fellow overseas Filipino worker who was in dire need of financial support.

To all the leaders and members of the Overseas Filipino Workers Support Group, officers and members of the Marianas Association of Filipino Architects and Engineers, Bicol Association's drop-off point in Dandan and Quarter Master, KWAW 100.3 FM Pinoy Music Power radio program, to all of you who helped in spearheading the donation drive for Geraldine Amor and her two minor kids, thank you for your untiring support. Thank you for sharing your hard-earned money in spite of the hardship that we are facing. We could not have reached the amount of $4,800 in total donations to finance Geraldine's hospitalization and burial expenses back home and her two minor kids' basic needs on the island without your support.

Indeed, it had been proven that the Filipino Bayanihan spirit and camaraderie for a noble cause still exists. Sir Winston Churchill said and I quote, "We make a living by what we get, we make life by what we give." Let us think of what we can do to help our people and government by exercising our social obligation, and don't wait for what our government can do to us. The spirit of oneness and cooperation of overseas Filipino workers elsewhere in the world cannot be denied back home. They say that we are the modern day heroes and yet the basic welfare services that we need overseas and back home are still crawling into reality. It is all just on the drawing pad.

Carlito J. Marquez
Puerto Rico, Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°

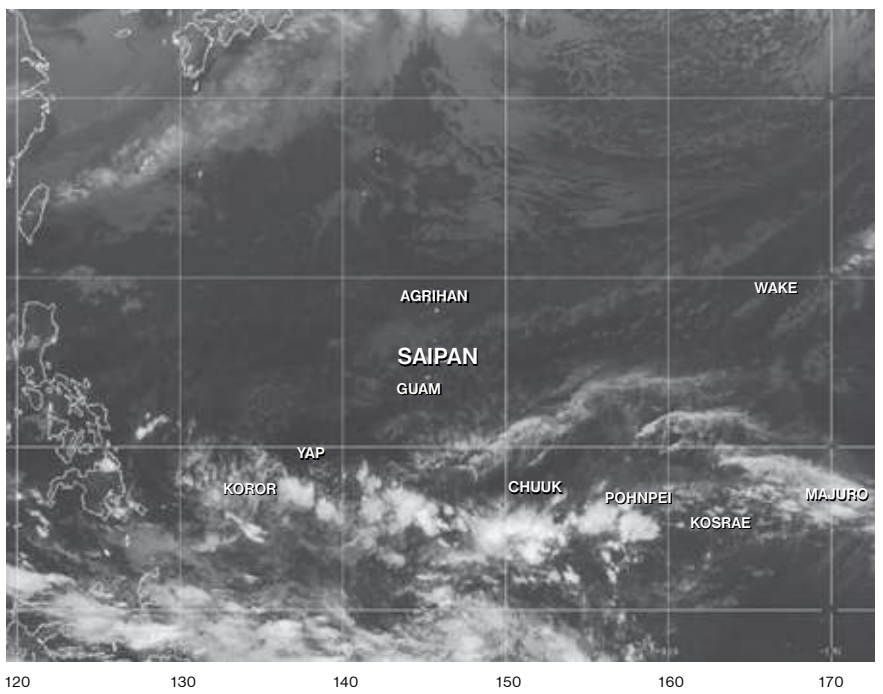
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Mostly Sunny	▲84	▼75
Palau	Showers	▲86	▼77
Yap	Showers	▲88	▼76
Chuuk	Showers	▲88	▼79
Pohnpei	Showers	▲85	▼76
Kosrae	Cloudy	▲89	▼76
Majuro	Mostly Sunny	▲83	▼77

Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Sunny	▲73	▼62
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲46	▼24
Hong Kong	Showers	▲70	▼66
Honolulu	Showers	▲74	▼65
London	Cloudy	▲52	▼37
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲72	▼50
Manila	Showers	▲91	▼75
Melbourne	Dreary	▲72	▼55
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲75	▼65
New York	Mostly Cloudy	▲40	▼34
Osaka	Rain/Snow	▲45	▼35
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	▲45	▼37
Pusan	Sunny	▲49	▼38
Rome	Showers	▲50	▼36
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	▲54	▼38
San Francisco	Cloudy	▲62	▼51
Seoul	Sunny	▲37	▼27
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲48	▼34
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	▲48	▼34

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00AM, FRIDAY, FEB. 20, 2009
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A diffuse shear line extends southwestward from 25N165N to 19N152E to 17N140E with a broken line of clouds and showers situated along its boundary. A surface trough extends west from a circulation centered near 3N142E to 7N133E. Convergence associated with this disturbance is generating scattered showers east of Koror between 5N and 8N from 135E to 138E. Trade wind convergence is enhancing shower activity over a large area of Micronesia. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms can be found generally within 100 miles of the main convergence line extending from 6N142E to 4N151E to 7N170E. This area includes Pohnpei and Kosrae.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

6:57 AM Today	High Tide:	1.6 Feet
11:56 AM Today	Low Tide:	1.3 Feet
4:36 PM Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:39 AM	6:23 PM
Sunday	6:38 AM	6:23 PM
Monday	6:38 AM	6:23 PM
Tuesday	6:37 AM	6:23 PM
Wednesday	6:37 AM	6:24 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	3:45 AM	3:10 PM
Sunday	4:29 AM	4:02
Monday	5:11 AM	4:53 PM
Tuesday	5:50 AM	5:43 PM
Wednesday	6:27 AM	6:32 PM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 1, 2009

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota

CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm	1,7

Saipan-Guam

CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	Daily
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm	1,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	2,3,4,5,6
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily

Saipan-Narita

NW 099	5:00am	7:35am	Daily
NW 078	8:20am	1:30pm	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm	Daily

Guam-Narita

NW 73	4:10pm	7:00pm	Daily
NW 81	3:55pm	6:55pm	Daily

Saipan-Osaka

OZ 119	4:00am	6:40am	1,4,6
NW 083	4:30pm	7:20pm	Daily

Guam-Osaka

NW 79	4:45pm	7:35pm	Daily

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078	8:20am	11:05am	Daily

Guam-Nagoya

NW 23	4:30pm	7:20pm	Daily

Saipan-Incheon

OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 119	4:00am	11:25am	1,4,6 via Osaka
OZ 606	3:20pm	7:00pm	Daily

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608	3:20am	6:50am	1,4,5,7

Saipan-Shanghai

FM 844	2:50am	5:40am	2,6

Rota-Guam

CO 9597	12:50pm	1:20pm	1,7

Guam-Palau

CO 953	7:40pm	8:40pm	1,7
CO 893	5:50pm	6:50pm	3,5

Palau-Manila

CO 893	7:35pm	9:10pm	3,5

Guam-Manila

CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	3,5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:50am	1,2,4,6,7

Nagoya-Manila

NW 71	8:40pm	11:55pm	Daily

Incheon-Hongkong

OZ 721	9:20am	12:00pm	Daily
OZ 723	7:45pm	10:35pm	Daily
OZ 7173	8:00pm	10:50pm	5,7

Narita-Manila

NW 1	7:00pm	10:55pm	Daily

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan

CO 9598	3:25am	4:00am	5,6

Guam-Saipan

CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	1,2,3,4,7
CO9598	2:30am	4:00am	5,6 via Rota
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9600	10:20am	11:10am	Daily
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

Narita-Saipan

NW 076	10:15am	2:40pm	Daily
NW 077	6:25pm	1:20am+1	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 100	8:45pm	1:10am+1	Daily

Narita-Guam

NW 74	9:45am	2:20pm	Daily
NW 82	10:30am	3:10pm	Daily

Osaka-Saipan

OZ 120	9:50pm	2:20am+1	3,5,7
NW 084	10:40am	3:05pm	Daily

Osaka-Guam

NW 80	10:30am	3:00pm	Daily

Nagoya-Saipan

NW 077	9:00pm	1:20am+1	Daily

Nagoya-Guam

NW 24	10:00am	2:30pm	Daily

Incheon-Saipan

OZ 605	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	3,5,7 via Osaka
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6

Busan-Saipan

OZ 607	9:00pm	2:10am+1	3,4,6,7

Shanghai-Saipan

FM 843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1,5

Guam-Rota

CO 9598	2:30am	3:00am	5,6

Palau-Guam

CO 954	2:30am	5:25am	1,2
CO 892	2:35am	5:30am	4,6

Manila-Palau

CO 892	10:10pm	1:50am+1	3,5

Manila-Guam

CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	3,5 via Koror
CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:10pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7

Manila-Nagoya

NW 72	6:30am	11:05am	Daily

Hongkong-Incheon

OZ 724	12:30am	4:50am	Daily
OZ 7183	12:45am	5:05am	1,4,6
OZ 722	1:30pm	5:45pm	Daily

Manila-Narita

NW 2	7:45am	12:40pm	Daily

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

Schedule of Religious Services

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am
Monday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm
Saturday: 6am and 6pm

Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish
Wednesday Mass: 6pm
First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm
Saturday Mass: 6pm
Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am

Saint Jude Parish
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm

San Antonio Parish
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Tuesday and Friday: 6pm

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6pm

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am and 10am
Monday-Wednesday: 7pm
Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Sunday: 6am and 7:30am
Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 9am
Wednesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10:30am

San Vicente Parish
Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6pm

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 7:30am
Tuesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10am-Baptism

Santa Soledad
Sunday: 7:30am

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm
Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Worship/Study Opportunities
Adult Sunday School: 9am
Youth Sunday School: 9am
English Worship Service Sunday: 10am
Sunday Service: 5:30pm
Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm
Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm
Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm;
Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm
Mid-week Service: 7:30pm
Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm
Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm
Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau,
Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Worship Service: 9am
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am
Sunday: 7am
Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm
Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (English)
Saturday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville
Sunday Services
9:00 AM
Place of the church-next to Mt. Carmel Cathedral on Chalan Kanoa Dr. • Tel: 322-6158
Pastor JJ Matsumoto

Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group
8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
English Service: 9-11am, Sunday
Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 8:20am
Sunday Adult: 10am
Sunday Adult: 11:30am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am–12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided)
Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620

Saipan Bible Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30-10am
Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 6pm
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church
(Formerly Saipan Baptist Church)
Afetna St., San Antonio
Sunday
9am Sunday school
10am Regular worship
6pm worship
Wednesday
7pm worship
Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. Mclure at 234-1939/235-7779.

Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi
Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries
Sunday 5:30am-6:30am
Morning prayer
7am-9am English service
7am-9am Sunday school
10am-12noon English service, Koblerville
Wednesday 7pm-9pm Prayer meeting
Saturday 7pm-9pm Tagalog service
Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship:10:30am
Sunday PM Worship:7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

FEBRUARY 21, 2000

U.S. -GAO report defies OIA findings

If it is any consolation to the harsh accusations hurled by the federal government against the Commonwealth's heavy reliance on foreign labor, the United States General Accounting Office has reported positive developments in the CNMI economy buoyed by the presence of guest workers in the islands. A February 2000 report prepared by the U.S.-GAO said the presence of foreign workers in the islands has been directly and indirectly paving the way for the continued survival of the government and businesses in other sectors. The GAO report questions findings by the Office of Insular Affairs that the garment and tourist industries and the workers they employ require government spending for services and infrastructure that exceeds what they contribute in revenue.

1Q gov't revenues up 10%

Fueled by slight improvements in visitor arrival figures and the continued growth of the apparel manufacturing industry, government revenues increased by 10 percent from $52.241 million in fiscal year 1999 to $58.056 million this year. Growth in this year's first quarter government revenues resulted to a landmark reduction in outstanding budget deficit by $10 million, according to a report from the office of Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio. The report said Capitol Hill intends to complement the stable growth of the local economy with the continued implementation of policies aimed at eliminating unwanted government spending.

FEBRUARY 21, 2001

Finance told to produce missing tobacco money

The absence of available money due to the missing tobacco settlement funds yesterday forced lawmakers to delay action on the proposed creation of the Tobacco Prevention and Control Advisory Board. The finance department came under fire during the public hearing at the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare following the discovery that the initial $815,000 tobacco settlement was diverted to CNMI general funds. Assistant to Finance Secretary Robert Schrack received barrage of inquiries on why payments were deposited and co-mingled to the general funds when appropriations of tobacco settlement were already identified and recommendations were received by the upper house.

Asian economic slowdown may hamper efforts to lure investors

Current economic conditions in major Asian countries may hamper efforts by the administration of Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio to lure more foreign investors into the proposed Northern Marianas Free Trade Zone. While Mr. Tenorio said a group of investors from Taipei has expressed interest in putting up investments here, he admitted that majority of businessmen were a little reluctant in branching out of Taiwan due to the regional economic slowdown. But the governor said there will be no letting up in efforts to promote the Free Trade Zone as an ideal place to do business, adding that the government will continue to look at other available means to attract more foreign investments into the CNMI.

FEBRUARY 21, 2002

Ex-senator indicted for fraud

Two executives whose construction firms previously handled the controversial $2.7 million "60 classrooms project" for Saipan public schools have been indicted before the US District Court on 17 felony counts, amid allegations that they misspent funds meant for the undertaking. Juan S. Demapan, president of the locally-based Demapan Engineering and Construction, was arrested yesterday on charges of wire fraud, money laundering, making, issuing and negotiating false bills of lading and aiding and abetting. He will be arraigned today at 10:30am. Demapan, a former Senate President under the CNMI Legislature, made his first appearance before the federal court yesterday afternoon, after he surrendered himself to authorities in the morning.

Customs revenue drops 27 percent

For the fourth month in a row, customs collection fell in January, this time by a whopping 27 percent when compared to the same period last year. Although collection figures from October 2001 to January 2002 showed no appreciable differences between them-averaging at $4.31 million a month-the same figures show a marked drop when compared to the collection figures of Fiscal Year 2000-2001, covering the same period. (See graph) According to Customs Director Joe Mafnas, the division collected a total of $4.142 million in January this year, which is slightly lower than the $4.332 million collected in December 2001.

Business

Spike seen in jobless claims

WASHINGTON (AP)—February is shaping up to be another brutal month of job losses: The number of laid-off workers receiving unemployment benefits hit an all-time high of nearly 5 million, and new jobless claims are at levels not seen since the early 1980s.

The Labor Department reported Thursday that the number of people receiving regular unemployment benefits rose by 170,000 to 4.99 million for the week ending Feb. 7, marking the fourth straight week continuing claims have hit a record.

The surge in joblessness has pushed those claims far above the 2.77 million people getting benefits a year ago. The number totals 6.54 million with the inclusion of an additional 1.5 million people who are getting extended benefits under a program passed by Congress last summer.

And those numbers are sure to climb higher, based on the flood of newly laid-off workers seeking benefits.

The government reported Thursday that new jobless claims for last week totaled 627,000, the same level as the previous week but higher than economists expected. It also was near the recent high of 631,000 hit three weeks ago, which was the most new weekly claims since 1982 when the country was in another severe recession. The three straight weeks of seasonally adjusted claims above 600,000 also is the longest stretch in more than 26 years.

"The labor market is in disarray," said Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Economy.com. "We are seeing job losses across nearly every industry and every region of the country."

Based on current trends, net job losses for February could well top 700,000, Zandi said. That would surpass the 598,000 jobs lost in January, which had been the biggest total since 1974.

Worries about the economy dragged the Dow Jones industrial average down nearly 90 points Thursday to close at 7,465.95, its lowest level in more than six years. The Standard & Poor's 500 index and the technology-heavy Nasdaq composite index also fell.

Even with approval of a $787 billion economic stimulus package this week, economists are warning that any recovery may not take hold until late this year at the earliest, given that the housing market is still deteriorating, the financial market has yet to stabilize and job losses are mounting.

Dennis Lockhart, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, said in a speech Thursday that the economy faces obstacles for the next several quarters that would work against a strong recovery.

FBI tracks down Texas financier in fraud case

WASHINGTON (AP)—Texas financier R. Allen Stanford was tracked down Thursday in Virginia, where FBI agents served him with legal papers in a multi-billion-dollar fraud case.

FBI agents, acting at the request of the Securities and Exchange Commission, served Stanford court orders and other documents, the FBI and the SEC said.

Stanford is not under arrest and is not in custody.

In a civil complaint Tuesday, the SEC accused Stanford, two other executives and three of his companies with committing an $8 billion fraud that lured investors with promises of improbable and unsubstantiated high returns on certificates of deposit and other investments. It's not clear how much of the $8 billion was lost and how much investors might recover.

Until regulators got help Thursday from the FBI, the SEC had not been able to find Stanford.

A law enforcement official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the billionaire was served Thursday afternoon by an agent who had staked out a location in Fredericksburg, Va.

Around 1:45 p.m., the agent spotted Stanford in a car driven by Stanford's girlfriend. The agent spoke to Stanford, who was riding in the passenger side, the official said. The agent handed Stanford the SEC complaint, a federal court order freezing Stanford assets and another order naming a receiver.

Stanford told the agent he understood and would make arrangements to surrender his passport, the official said.

Stanford has not been charged with any crime, though federal agents continue to investigate the case.

The fallout from the fraud case is already rattling around the global financial system.

Venezuela on Thursday seized a failed bank controlled by Stanford after a run on deposits there, while clients were prevented from withdrawing their money from Stanford International Bank and its affiliates in a half-dozen other countries.

Nation

Obama treads lightly in meeting with Canada's PM

OTTAWA (AP)—President Barack Obama courted warmer relations with America's snowy northern neighbor Thursday, declining to ask war-weary Canada to do more in Afghanistan, promising he won't allow a protectionist creep into U.S. trade policy and talking reassuringly around thorny energy issues.

Obama-happy crowds cheered Obama's seven-hour visit, his first outside U.S. borders as president, and he returned the compliment with a quick stop at an indoor market where he delighted shopkeepers by picking up pastries and souvenirs for his daughters.

"I love this country and think that we could not have a better friend and ally," Obama said as he appeared side-by-side with Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper at gothic Parliament Hill. He later slipped slightly as he walked to his plane and joked that the weather reminded him of Chicago.

Harper in turn rolled out the red carpet for the new U.S. president. The Conservative leader had been close to President George W. Bush, personally and on policy. But he made clear with subtle jabs backward that he was casting his and his country's lot now with the vastly more popular Obama.

AP

President Barack Obama and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper walk down the Hall of Honour for a joint news conference on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, Thursday Feb. 19, 2009.

"As we all know, one of President Obama's big missions is to continue world leadership by the United States of America, but in a way that is more collaborative," Harper said, an apparent reference to Bush's go-it-alone diplomatic style.

Still, rhetorical niceties aside, there are some sharp differences between the U.S. and its largest trading partner and biggest supplier of oil. On several topics, where Obama came armed with reassurances, Harper offered mini-lectures, albeit gently delivered.

On the 7-year-old Afghanistan war, for instance, the Canadian leader said that NATO and U.S. forces fighting a resurgent Taliban insurgency are not "through our own efforts going to establish peace and security in Afghanistan." With Obama's administration undertaking a broad review of the U.S. strategy there, Harper suggested that any new policy "have the idea of an end date, of a transition to Afghan responsibility for security, and to greater Western partnership for economic development."

On Canada's massive oil-rich tar sands, Harper suggested that the kind of emissions regulations that environmentalists would like Obama to support would be unfair, making a comparison to the U.S. coal industry. "It's very hard to have a tough regulatory system here when we are competing with an unregulated economy south of the border," Harper said.

Chimp in Conn. attack had unusual bond with owner

STAMFORD, Conn. (AP)—Travis the chimpanzee's relationship with his owner, a lonely widow, was closer than those of some married couples. She gave him the finest food, and wine in long-stemmed glasses. They took baths together and cuddled in the bed they shared. Travis brushed Herold's hair each night and pined for her when she was away. If she left the house alone, Travis would give her a kiss. "If I left with someone Travis would get upset," Herold said Wednesday.

Experts say the unusually human relationship would have been confusing for any animal. It may have also played a role in Travis' savage attack Monday on Herold's friend, 55-year-old Charla Nash of Stamford.

"This is a crazy relationship," said Stephen Rene Tello, executive director of Primarily Primates, a sanctuary for chimps in Texas. "He was probably very bonded with her. I can kind of see it in his eyes this is his surrogate mother."

AP

Sandra Herold, owner of Travis the chimpanzee, speaks to reporters in Stamford, Conn. on Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2009.

And chimps like 14-year-old Travis, who was shot and killed by police, protect their mates and turf.

"If there is another person entering his space, he might consider it a threat to his territory, or even his mate," Tello said.

Police say Travis attacked Nash when she arrived at the house to help lure the chimp back into Herold's house. Herold speculated that Travis was being protective of her and attacked Nash because had a different hairstyle, was driving a different car and held a stuffed toy in front of her face to get the chimp's attention.

Burris' support in black community begins to waver

CHICAGO (AP)—A group of black ministers who supported U.S. Sen. Roland Burris as he fought to get his job now plan to ask for his resignation following revelations that he tried to raise money for the disgraced governor who appointed him, one of the ministers told The Associated Press on Thursday.

Many of the city's influential black pastors supported Burris because of his scandal-free reputation—even though he was appointed by then-Gov. Rod Blagojevich three weeks after the governor was arrested for allegedly trying to sell the Senate seat.

Now some of those pastors will ask Burris to resign, according to the minister, who spoke on condition of anonymity because a meeting with Burris had not yet been scheduled.

Clergy Speaks Interdenominational, an umbrella group that includes hundreds of Chicago's black churches, will meet Friday to discuss its support for Burris, spokeswoman Stephanie Gadlin said. For now, the group still supports him and its leaders are unaware of discussions about asking him to resign, she said.

SC Rep: Opposition to stimulus is slap in face

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP)—The highest-ranking black congressman said Thursday that opposition to the federal stimulus package by southern GOP governors is "a slap in the face of African-Americans."

U.S. Rep. James Clyburn, D-S.C., said he was insulted when the governors of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and his home state, which have large black populations, said they might not accept some of the money from the $787 billion stimulus package.

Texas Gov. Rick Perry said Wednesday he would accept the money, and none of the others has rejected it outright. The Republican governors of Idaho and Alaska also said they had reservations about whether the money would come with too many strings attached, but Clyburn said he was particularly taken aback by southern governors who said they might decline it.

"These four governors represent states that are in the proverbial black belt," Clyburn said.

A spokesman for South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford accused Clyburn of playing the race card.

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD MEETING

The regular monthly meeting of the Zoning Board will be held on Thursday, March 05, 2009 at 5:00 pm, Saipan Zoning Office, 2nd floor of Joeten Dandan. The public is invited to attend. The agenda will include:

A. Preliminary Matters: Call to Order, Roll Call, Adoption of Agenda, Adoption of Minutes, Communications
B. Reports: Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Administrator, Committees, Legal Counsel
C. Public Hearings. None
D. Contested Cases. None
E. Permits, Rezones, and Related Actions - Review and Decide
   a. Map 24 Rezone VR to VC, Lot 002 I 09
   b. Map 26 Rezone VR to VC, H315-R1
F. Old Business. Update on 2008-0302 LaoLao Bay Resort shoreline access report; Discussion on strategy for updating the Saipan Zoning Law.
G. New Business. Review new rezone proposals and approve advertising for public comment
H. Public Comment
I. Executive (Closed) Session - Consult with legal counsel regarding pending or anticipated legal matters
J. Miscellaneous: Other Matters, Announcements, Next Meeting. Adjourn

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the Board meeting, or if you require assistance, please contact Steve Tilley, Zoning Administrator at 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & 10 CMC 3511, et seq.).

/s/ Henry S. Hofschneider, Chairman.

ACROSS THE NATION

Arizona 9-year-old pleads guilty in shooting death

ST. JOHNS, Ariz. (AP—A 9-year-old boy accused of methodically shooting his father and his father's roommate to death last fall pleaded guilty Thursday to one count of negligent homicide, settling the case that shocked and mystified the nation. Under a plea agreement, he pleaded guilty in the death of the roommate and charges of premeditated murder for both deaths were dropped. Police said the boy used a .22-caliber rifle to shoot the men as they returned home from work Nov. 5. The boy's plea spares the rural community of about 4,000 from what would have been an emotional trial and prevents the boy from serving time in the state juvenile corrections system or being tried as an adult. He was polite in court and was never asked to explain any motive for the killings. The boy has not yet been sentenced. He could be sent to the county juvenile system, which would keep him close to his relatives. Apache County Attorney Michael Whiting wants the boy to undergo extensive mental evaluations and treatment, an option allowed by the plea agreement.

Officials: Woman killed in Mass. house explosion

SOMERSET, Mass. (AP)—An explosion possibly caused by a gas leak leveled a home Thursday evening, killing a woman and her dog and damaging at least two nearby houses, officials said. Neighbors said they smelled natural gas before the blast, which strew debris in the street and rattled people miles away. "It looked like a twister had gone through there," said William Meehan, chairman of Somerset's board of selectmen. Meehan said investigators believed the woman, whose name was not immediately released, was alone in the house that was destroyed, except for her dog, which also was killed. Investigators were still examining the rubble. One firefighter suffered a minor injury, Meehan said.

2 suspects arrested in southeastern Pa. arsons

COATESVILLE, Pa. (AP)—A second man was arrested Thursday in connection with a series of arsons plaguing southeastern Pennsylvania, hours after a teenager was charged with setting nine fires in this steel town. Mark Gilliam, 20, was arrested Thursday night on a federal charge in the Jan. 25 attempted arson of a restaurant in Thorndale, the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives said in a statement. Gilliam, who was arrested without incident at his West Chester home, is expected to appear in U.S. District Court in Philadelphia on Friday. It was not immediately clear if Gilliam had a lawyer. A phone number listed for a Mark Gilliam on the block where the ATF said the suspect lived was disconnected.

Asia

Clinton names special NKorea envoy

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton named a special envoy for North Korea on Friday but warned the communist nation that ties with the United States will not improve unless it stops threatening South Korea.

Amid a disturbing rise in belligerent rhetoric from the North toward the South and signs it may be getting ready to test-fire a ballistic missile, she urged Pyongyang to halt "provocative and unhelpful" gestures and rejoin stalled six-nation nuclear disarmament talks.

"North Korea is not going to get a different relationship with the United States while insulting and refusing dialogue with (South Korea)," Clinton told reporters at a news conference with South Korean Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan.

"We are calling on the government of North Korea to refrain from being provocative and unhelpful in a war of words that it has been engaged in because that is not very fruitful," she said.

AP

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton smiles as she waits for South Korean President Lee Myung-bak before their meeting at the presidential Blue House in Seoul, South Korea, Friday, Feb. 20, 2009.

Clinton, who also received a military briefing on the situation along the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea and discussed broader issues with South Korean President Lee Myung-Bak, praised Seoul for its democracy and prosperity.

She said that was "in stark contrast to the tyranny and poverty across the border to the North" and commended the "people of South Korea and your leaders for your calm, resolve and determination in the face of provocative and unhelpful statements and actions by the North."

Australian wildfire survivors seek help to rebuild

WHITTLESEA, Australia (AP)—The electrician's tools were incinerated, the trucker's rig reduced to a useless, burned shell. The deadly wildfires that swept southern Australia destroyed more than lives—they destroyed livelihoods.

As the days since the Feb. 7 blazes wear on, the needs of the survivors grow more complex. Where basic tools of survival like water and food were once enough, residents of the devastated areas now need more: tools to rebuild their lives.

"My biggest point now is getting fathers back to work," Marisa Pegoraro said Thursday from her chair inside a relief center she has frequented since she and her family narrowly escaped being burned alive in the inferno. "They have to feel like they're looking after their families."

As many as 7,500 people were left homeless by the fires that killed at least 208 people almost two weeks ago. These survivors are now living in tents, caravans, borrowed houses or with friends and family. They want to go home. Soon.

In the fire zone, the sound of chain saws felling scorched timber has replaced the rumble of fire trucks pumping water onto smoking ruins as emergency crews work to make the landscape safe for people to return.

The process of rebuilding lost homes is unlikely to begin for months and will take many years, but survivors want to feel that the process is moving forward and they need tools to help clear the rubble from their land and sift through the wreckage.

ASIAN BRIEFS

UN official: Prevent Sri Lanka civilian casualties

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—The United Nations' top humanitarian official is urging the Sri Lankan government and Tamil Tiger rebels to do everything possible to avoid civilian casualties amid heavy fighting in the country's civil war. John Holmes was to travel to near the northern war zone Friday to discuss the conditions of more than 30,000 displaced ethnic Tamils currently in government-run camps south of the fighting and the plans for tens of thousands of others expected to join them in coming weeks. Government forces have captured the main strongholds of the Tamil Tiger rebels in the north in recent months and cornered them into a small sliver of land on the island's northeastern coast along with tens of thousands of civilians. "We are concerned about reports of heavy casualties to the civilian population" trapped in the area, Holmes told reporters Thursday after meeting with Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama. He called on both sides to avoid civilian casualties and appealed to the rebels to allow civilians to flee if they wish.

Earthquake hits disputed Kashmir region

SRINAGAR, India (AP)—A moderate 5.5 magnitude earthquake hit the Himalayan region of Kashmir on Friday, sending frightened residents running from their homes, but there were no immediate reports of deaths, officials said. The Indian Meteorological Department said the temblor struck at 9:18 a.m. on Friday near Baramullah, a town near the de-facto border that divides Indian and Pakistani-controlled Kashmir. Officials in the Himalayan region said the quake caused panic but no major damage. In 2005, a magnitude 7.6 earthquake hit the area, killing at least 78,000 people. "We have been collecting reports from the area. There is no report of death or major damage so far," said Amir Ali, an official with the local disaster management committee on the Indian side. Mohammed Yussef, a police officer in Baramullah, said some houses that suffered cracks in 2005 quake were further damaged. "The people all ran out into the streets. There is lots of panic," he said. While there were no reports of casualties in the town, officials have not yet been able to make contact with more remote areas, he said.

Bomb kills 6 at Shiite funeral in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Police say a bomb has killed at least six mourners at a funeral in northwestern Pakistan for a slain Shiite Muslim leader. The blast tore through a funeral procession in the city of Dera Ismail Khan on Friday morning. City police official Miran Shah says at least six people have died and that others wounded by the explosion have been rushed to a hospital The city is a focus of rising sectarian violence in Pakistan, where hard-line Sunni Muslims groups, including the Taliban, have been gaining in strength.

World

What a mess! Experts ponder space junk problem

VIENNA (AP)—Think of it as a galactic garbage dump. With a recent satellite collision still fresh on minds, participants at a meeting in the Austrian capital this week are discussing ways to deal with space debris—junk that is clogging up the orbit around the Earth.

Some suggest a cosmic cleanup is the way to go. Others say time, energy and funds are better spent on minimizing the likelihood of future crashes by improving information sharing.

The informal discussions on the sidelines of a meeting of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which began Feb. 9 and ends Friday, arose from concern about the collision of a derelict Russian spacecraft and a working U.S. Iridium commercial satellite.

The Feb. 10 incident, which is still under investigation, generated space junk that could circle the Earth and threaten other satellites for the next 10,000 years; it added to the already worrying amount of debris surrounding the planet.

Nicholas L. Johnson, NASA's chief scientist for orbital debris, said about 19,000 objects are present in the low and high orbit around the Earth—including about 900 satellites, but much of it is just plain junk.

He estimated that included in the 19,000 count are about a thousand objects larger than 10 centimeters (4 inches) that were created by last week's satellite collision, in addition to many smaller ones. He predicted that if more junk accumulates, the likelihood of similar collisions—currently very rare—will increase by 2050.

To Johnson, the "true solution" in the long run is to go get the junk—or push it away to a higher altitude before it has time to crash into anything.

"Today's environment is all right but the environment is going to get worse, therefore I need to start thinking about the future and how can I clean up sometime in the future," he said.

Johnson is the co-lead of an International Academy of Astronautics study that is exploring ways of extracting space debris from Earth orbit.

Some of the suggestions sound pretty spaced out.

One proposes attaching balloons to pieces of debris to increase their atmospheric drag and bring them back to Earth faster. Another, said Johnson, foresees attaching a 10-mile (16-kilometer) electrodynamic tether to debris that would generate a current, which then could be controlled from the ground enabling technicians to bring it down.

Many scientists are skeptical about the possibility of a cleanup Richard Crowther, the chief British delegate to the meeting, suggested extracting debris from space was costly and risked causing more collisions or explosions that, in turn, would generate more debris.

Crowther, an expert on space debris and so-called Near Earth Objects, suggested it was important to improve information-sharing about the location of objects in orbit to minimize future crashes since each collision creates more debris, further congesting Earth orbit.

Lieberman endorses Netanyahu for Israeli premier

JERUSALEM (AP)—Benjamin Netanyahu won the endorsement Thursday of an anti-Arab politician who emerged from Israel's election as a kingmaker, virtually ensuring that the hawkish, U.S.-educated politician will once again become prime minister.

The big question is whether Netanyahu will be able to build the broad coalition he will likely need to stay in power and avoid clashing with the Obama administration and much of the world.

With his top rival, centrist Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, signaling that she would enter the opposition, Netanyahu's prospects for such a coalition do not look good. He will probably have little choice but to forge a coalition with nationalist and religious parties opposed to peacemaking with the Palestinians and Israel's other Arab neighbors.

One major Orthodox Jewish party, Shas, also threw its support to Netanyahu, joining a group of similar movements that did the same.

"Today the foundations were laid for an extremist right-wing government under the leadership of Netanyahu," Livni said in a text message to 80,000 members of her Kadima Party. "That is not our way and there is nothing for us in such a government... We must be an alternative of hope and go into opposition."

If Livni stays out of Netanyahu's government, it would almost surely hurt Netanyahu's credibility with the United States and Europe. And his hold on power would be more tenuous in a narrow coalition of rightists, with hard-line allies threatening to bring down his government in the face of any concession for peace.

WORLD BRIEFS

Argentina orders Holocaust-denying bishop out

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP)—The traditionalist bishop whose denials of the Holocaust embarrassed the Vatican was ordered Thursday to leave Argentina within 10 days. The Interior Ministry said it had ordered Richard Williamson out of Argentina because he had failed to declare his true job as director of a seminary on immigration forms and because his comments on the Holocaust "profoundly insult Argentine society, the Jewish community and all of humanity by denying a historic truth." Williamson's views created an uproar last month when Pope Benedict XVI lifted his excommunication and that of three other bishops consecrated by the late Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre as part of a process meant to heal a rift with ultraconservatives. The flap led the Vatican to demand that the British clergyman recant before he can be admitted as a bishop in the Roman Catholic Church. It also prompted the Society of St. Pius X, founded by Lefebvre, to dismiss Williamson as director of the La Reja seminary in Argentina and to distance itself from his views.

Kyrgyz parliament approves US base closure

BISHKEK, Kyrgyzstan (AP)—Kyrgyzstan's parliament voted Thursday to close a key U.S. air base in the country—a move that could hamper President Barack Obama's efforts to increase the number of U.S. forces in Afghanistan. Deputies voted 78-1 with two abstentions for the government-backed bill to cancel the lease agreement on the Manas air base, a transit point for 15,000 troops and 500 tons of cargo each month to and from Afghanistan. The move follows Russia's offer of $2.15 billion in aid and loans to the impoverished Central Asian country. U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates, in Poland for NATO talks, said the United States would consider paying more rent to continue using the strategic base. Speaking after the parliament vote in Kyrgyzstan, Gates said he considers talks still open over the future of the base.

3 acquitted in brazen slaying of Russian reporter

MOSCOW (AP)—A jury in Moscow voted unanimously Thursday to acquit three men in the killing of journalist Anna Politkovskaya, dimming hopes for justice in a case that has mocked Russia's claims to be a modern democratic nation. The brazen 2006 slaying of the crusading investigative reporter sent a grim signal to other dissenters in Russia, proving that even the most prominent of Kremlin critics could be murdered with impunity. And it provoked international outrage, raising suspicions that her death was ordered by prominent public officials. A jury acquitted two Chechen brothers and a morose ex-cop following a trial that defense attorneys and Politkovskaya's supporters said was marred by prosecution errors and oversights.

Maharlika

PINOY LIFE IN THE MARIANAS

Saturday, February 21, 2009

AMONG FILIPINOS IN THE COMMONWEALTH

'Bayanihan' is still very much alive

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

When news broke out that a 35-year-old Filipino worker diagnosed with a debilitating disease is seeking the community's help so she could return home, members of the Filipino community heeded the call. Within days, Filipino civic leaders took the initiative of collecting thousands of dollars on behalf of Geraldine P. Amor, as well as her two minor sons.

The patient finally returned to the Philippines about two weeks after she was confined in the intensive care unit of the Commonwealth Health Center. Two days after returning home, she passed away at the Manila Doctors Hospital due to complications from lupus, an autoimmune disease that can affect various parts of the body, including the skin, joints, heart, lungs, blood, kidneys, and brain.

But even after Amor's passing, Filipinos on Saipan—as well as their friends in the U.S. mainland—continued to donate money for Amor's sons—a 3-year-old and a 1-year-old.

Helping others like Amor in their times of greatest need is just one of the many facets of "bayanihan" which continues to hold strong among Filipinos on Saipan, despite the economic difficulties they themselves face and amid the uncertainties brought by the federal takeover of CNMI immigration by June 1.

"Bayanihan" is a Filipino term for a spirit of communal unity or effort to achieve a particular objective. "Bayanihan" is taken from the root word "bayani," meaning "hero." Thus, "bayanihan" also means being a hero to one another.

Carlito Marquez, one of the first individuals to volunteer his time and effort to help Amor by rallying others to donate whatever they can for the patient, said "bayanihan" is very much alive among Filipinos "even if we are experiencing difficulties."

"I believe in the spirit of bayanihan, like cleanup drives, the Pistang Pinoy. And just recently, during the donation campaign for Geraldine Amor… the result was overwhelming. We gathered around $4,800 in cash donation," said Marquez, chairman of the welfare committee of the Overseas Filipino Worker Support Group and one of the officers of the Marianas Association of Filipino Architects and Engineers.

The origin of the term "bayanihan" can be traced to a common tradition in Philippine towns where community members volunteer to help a family move to a new place. The process involves literally carrying the entire house to a new location. This is done by forming a strong frame of bamboo poles to lift the house's stilts from the ground and carrying the whole house on the shoulders of men positioned at the ends of each pole.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Bayani Association led by its president, Tina Lifoifoi, hands in a $500 check donation to Sr. Stella Mangona of Karidat/Guma Esperansa to help victims of human trafficking and domestic abuse in the CNMI. Bayani raised the funds through a cultural show that featured Filipino songs and dances.

Filipinos on Saipan—even those who are earning only minimum wage—donate money and goods to victims of natural disasters in the Philippines, from floods to typhoons, fires and earthquakes.

Melvin Malvar, president of the Marianas Institute of Filipino CPAs, said "bayanihan" is about sharing one's time and skills without expecting something in return. MIFICPA members, he said, exemplify "bayanihan" by taking part in beach cleanups, conducting professional skills training programs, helping fellow OFWs prepare their tax returns free of charge, and fundraising activities to help others who are in need of financial support.

Malvar's other organization, the Bayani Association, recently held a song and dance show that not only showcased Filipino culture but also helped raise funds for Karidat/Guma Esperansa to help victims of human trafficking and domestic violence. Malvar said the group also continues to raise funds to build classrooms in the Philippines and fund the education of children of former overseas Filipino workers who are now having financial difficulties.

Bong De Guzman, who has been a civil engineer on Saipan for 20 years and the current president of the Marianas Association of Filipino Engineers and Architects, said a true blooded Filipino always has the desire to be of help to others.

"Every time we hear or read any tragic accident or serious illness afflicting a kababayan, we are saddened and want to extend help to the victim and his family," he said. "Even though we do not know personally the victim, solicitation for monetary contributions are done right away and even prayers are offered during Masses."

Minda Castro of the United Filipino Organization and The Shepherds Choir, commends groups that continue to work with the Philippine government in offering skills upgrading classes, help clean up beaches and other tourist sites, and sponsor cultural events.

Jun S. Lapeceros, of Mover, said "bayanihan" is about helping others who need financial help, and volunteering one's time for worthy causes such as religious activities and health screening.

"In my 20 years here on Saipan as a foreign worker, I still believe in, and practice 'bayanihan'. These are the activities also that contributed to my selection as one of the 10 outstanding OFWs here in the CNMI," he said.

Employer of deceased houseworker seeks RP help on insurance benefits

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A local employer has appealed to the Philippine Consulate General to help the family of a houseworker who was among hundreds of people killed after a ferry capsized in the Philippines last year.

Betty Terlaje, budget and fiscal officer of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., is asking Philippine Consul General Wilfredo Maximo to look into the insurance claim of the family of her former houseworker, Editha Ybanez.

"Her family is not earning anymore because Edith's no longer here," Terlaje told *Saipan Tribune*. "Although Edith's no longer here and is no longer serving the CNMI, she contributed to the CNMI in many ways."

Terlaje said Ybanez's family is entitled to receive insurance coverage from the Philippine government in the amount of P200,000 (about $4,167) plus P20,000 (about $417) in burial benefits.

She said her houseworker was buried on Oct. 29, 2008, but the insurance funds have apparently not been issued yet, despite all necessary papers being forwarded already.

Ybanez, a long-time houseworker of Terlaje and her family, was among the hundreds of people who drowned after the ferry they were on capsized on June 22, 2008, in the Philippines.

Ybanez had been with Terlaje's family for 11 years.

Terlaje said the tragedy happened in June 2008, but Ybanez's body was identified through DNA only in October 2008.

Terlaje said she has been communicating with the family and was told by Ybanez's sister on Tuesday that they have been following up on the insurance claim almost daily but have not received anything yet.

"That should be a concern for all nonresident workers who paid their insurance, only to find out that it's dragging this long," she said.

"It's sad because the family has not received any benefits, especially since Editha was pretty much supporting her family in the Philippines," Telaje added.

Ybanez left Saipan on June 17, 2008, for a vacation in her hometown in Surigao, located in the southern part of the Philippines. She was supposed to come back to Saipan July 18, 2008.

"She was very bonded with my kids. She was more than a babysitter. She was like their mom when I'm away from home," the CUC official earlier said.

LABOR FRONT

Steps in filing an appeal

By FERDIE PONCE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Q: If the Labor's administrative hearing officer issues a decision favorable to the employer, what are the proper steps the complaining alien worker could take to file an appeal?

A: An appeal can be brought up by filing a notice of appeal on the standard form provided by Labor and making a payment of the fee. According to the new Labor reform law's regulations, a notice of appeal must be filed within 15 days of service of the decision on the party who is appealing.

Alternative forms of notice by telephone or electronic may be used. The party who seeks relief from the Labor Secretary is called the appellant, while the party against whom relief is sought is the appellee.

■ ■ ■

Q: Does the Labor Secretary need to conduct a hearing on an appeal?

A: No. The Regulations state that no hearing or oral argument on an appeal is required. When the Secretary is exercising jurisdiction over appeals from final orders of the Labor administrative hearing office, he or she shall have all the powers and responsibilities of a hearing officer. The Secretary shall notify the parties of the time and place for any hearing on the appeal and shall not schedule the hearing with less than 15 days notice or change a hearing date with less than 15 days notice.

■ ■ ■

Q: When the Labor Secretary denies an appeal, can the appellant alien worker ask the court to review the Secretary's decision?

A: Under the Regulations, a party can file a petition for judicial review in court of a final action of the Labor Secretary after exhausting all administrative remedies. The party should initiate the petition for judicial review within 30 days of the Secretary's final action. The Regulations state that appeal from the Secretary's final action shall be directly to the CNMI Superior Court.

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30 hurt during flight from Manila to Tokyo

TOKYO (AP)—Japanese officials say severe turbulence during a Tokyo-bound Northwest Airlines flight from Manila has injured about 30 people.

Hiroshi Uchida, a fire department official, said Friday at least two people were seriously injured. Narita Airport International Corporation, which manages Tokyo's international airport, said about 30 people were injured.

Kyodo News agency said the Northwest flight carried 408 passengers and 14 crew members. Turbulence hit the plane while it was circling off the coast of Chiba, east of Tokyo, for landing.

The cause of the injuries was not immediately known.

The Northwest Airline Boeing 747-400 jet landed at Narita, near the Japanese capital, at 12:19 pm local time (0319 GMT), said Narita International Airport spokesman Fumihiko Aoyama.

"The airport did not receive any emergency signals from the pilot, and so we discovered the injuries after the plane landed. The cause is unknown," he said.

Secret VFA paper bared

Joker says pact favors erring US soldier

By MICHAEL LIM UBAC
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Sen. Joker Arroyo has produced a secret document that proves the one-sided nature of the Visiting Forces Agreement between the Philippines and the United States in the treatment of erring personnel.

"This is a well-kept secret," Arroyo yesterday said of the "complemental agreement" that he described as "part and parcel of the VFA" and constituted its implementing rules and regulations.

The 14-page document was signed by then US Ambassador to the Philippines Thomas C. Hubbard and then Foreign Secretary Domingo Siazon Jr. on Oct. 9, 1998.

According to Arroyo, the VFA mandates that an American soldier who commits a crime in the Philippines will be detained at any US embassy or penal facility.

But under the secret agreement, a Filipino soldier who commits a crime in the United States cannot be housed in a Philippine embassy or consulate but "shall be served in penal institutions in the United States suitable for the custody level of the prisoner."

"In short, confinement shall always be in a US penal institution. The only consuelo de bobo (consolation) is that we may ask which prison [the Filipino soldier] may be confined," Arroyo told reporters in a phone-patch interview.

Ratified by the Philippine Senate in 1999, the VFA governs the conduct of US troops engaged in military exercises in the country.

Calls for its review and outright scrapping have lately been aired, triggered by the continued detention at the US Embassy of Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith, who was convicted in 2006 of raping Filipino woman "Nicole."

Solid argument

Arroyo provided Senate reporters copies of the accord titled "Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and Government of the Republic of the Philippines regarding the Treatment of Republic of the Philippines Personnel Visiting the United States of America."

"We never had a solid argument why the VFA is unequal, with no reciprocity and no mutuality, until now," Arroyo said, adding that the document was provided by "a learned jurist."

Its preamble states that the two governments agreed to the accord "for the purpose of complementing the Agreement between the United States of America and the Republic of the Philippines regarding the treatment of United States Armed Forces visiting the Philippines."

Arroyo said the matter should not be elevated to the Supreme Court but should be resolved within the Philippine government's political department because the foreign secretary "speaks for the President."

Siazon is now the Philippine ambassador to Japan.

Asked to comment, Bayani Mangibin, spokesperson of the Department of Foreign Affairs, said he would look into the agreement, if indeed there was one, and seek a clarification from Siazon.

Colonial mentality

"The terms on confinement are so glaringly iniquitous, and that Philippine authorities ever agreed to this reflects our residual colonial mentality," Arroyo said.

He said that with Manila's consent, erring Filipino troops could even be held at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, which is operated by the US government as a detention camp for terrorists.

Arroyo said this anomaly in RP-US relations should be resolved in favor of Filipinos.

Philippine gunmen kidnap businessman and daughter

COTABATO, Philippines (AP)—Gunmen kidnapped a wealthy businessman and his daughter then warned the military to pull back after troops managed to get near their hideout in the southern Philippines, officials said Thursday.

The late Wednesday kidnappings in Cotabato City were the latest in a rash of abductions that has sparked a new government crackdown in the country's volatile south. Cotabato lies outside three southern provinces where several kidnappings have been staged in a sign that abductions may be spreading, an official said.

William Tan, a Filipino of Chinese descent whose family owns a chain of businesses including a hotel and a commercial store, was about to enter his residence in a car with his wife and two daughters when four heavily armed men approached, police said. The men shattered the vehicle's glass windows with their rifles and then dragged Tan out.

Tan's wife tried to fight back but was hit in the head with a pistol. The kidnappers then fled in a van with Tan and one of his two daughters toward a coastal area. They set the van on fire then transferred to two waiting motor boats, Cotabato city police chief Willie Dangane said.

Investigators have not identified the kidnappers but suspect they were members of the 11,600-strong rebel group Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which has been targeted by a months-long military offensive in nearby Maguindanao province, Dangane told reporters.

Cotabato Mayor Muslimin Sema said the kidnappers allowed Tan to call his family to warn the military to stop a planned rescue, apparently sensing that government troops managed to locate their hideout. Air force helicopters hovered in the area Wednesday.

Kidnappings for ransom, fed on huge numbers of unlicensed firearms and poverty, have eased in Cotabato city and nearby townships in the 1990s. Tan's kidnapping may have been inspired by a wave of kidnappings in the southern islands of Jolo and Basilan and the nearby Zamboanga Peninsula, Sema said.

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo has ordered the military and police to launch a new crackdown after expressing alarm over a series of kidnappings in the south by suspected members of the al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf group and its allied gunmen.

The Abu Sayyaf is on a U.S. blacklist of terrorist organizations for its links to al-Qaida and involvement in kidnappings, bombings and beheadings.

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Stimulus includes payments to Filipino veterans

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Cenon Antonio, 83, visits the decommissioned aircraft carrier USS *Midway*, now a museum. As part of the stimulus package President Barack Obama signed Tuesday, Antonio and other Filipino veterans from World War II will receive long-overdue payments for fighting the Japanese.

By TONY PERRY and RICHARD SIMON

(C) 2009, LOS ANGELES TIMES

SAN DIEGO—For more than 60 years, Cenon Antonio has waited for the payment promised by the U.S. government for fighting the Japanese after they conquered the Philippines early in World War II.

When the war was over, the United States reneged on its commitment to Antonio and other Filipino veterans, leaving what one U.S. senator calls a stain on the nation's honor.

"When America was down, we Filipinos stood up and fought beside America, but when peacetime came, the Americans were stingy," said Antonio, 82, who lives in San Diego.

Antonio said he still has nightmares of barely escaping capture by the Japanese, who tortured and killed prisoners. When Congress reneged in 1946 on the pledge to Filipinos, "it was like getting hit below the belt," he said.

Now, Antonio and other surviving Filipino veterans, many of whom live in Southern California, will get their long-overdue payment under a provision in the stimulus bill signed Tuesday by President Barack Obama.

The bill authorizes a $198 million payout. Each Filipino veteran who became a U.S. citizen is eligible for $15,000, each non-citizen $9,000.

It is a bittersweet victory—sweet because it represents a recognition of the bravery and sacrifice of the Filipinos; bitter because many veterans, including Antonio, think the payment is inadequate.

Antonio, a retired colonel in the Philippine army, said he remembers attacking Japanese patrols armed with only a knife, hiding Americans and bringing them food and medicine, rallying behind Gen. Douglas MacArthur when he returned, and fighting beside the Americans in some of the bloodiest combat of the war.

"This payment is not nearly enough to compensate for what we did," Antonio said.

Retired U.S. Army Col. Ed Ramsey, who escaped the Bataan Death March and organized Filipino guerrilla forces, agrees. "It's just a way to end it all, to make sure there are no more claims," said Ramsey, 91, who lives in Los Angeles.

The bill represents a compromise between legislators who insisted that the payments were long overdue and others, particularly some Republicans in the House, who wanted no payments at all to be made while programs for U.S. veterans are still not adequately funded. The Filipino veterans had hoped for monthly pensions and survivor benefits.

"This is not really what we wanted, but I've told the veterans that we have to be realistic," said Romeo Monteyro, 74, a retired colonel in the Philippine army who lives in Arizona and was part of the lobbying effort.

After the fall of Manila, many Filipinos took to the hills or hid in cities, often striking Japanese troops at night.

"We fought the Japanese with our hands," said Manny Braga, 81, who later was sent by the U.S. Army to Guam and Okinawa. "This payment is insufficient."

Braga, commander of the San Diego branch of the Filipino veterans association, noted that accepting the payment will preclude a veteran from making further claims, such as for disability payments.

Sen. Daniel K. Inouye, D-Hawaii, the chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee and a World War II veteran who pushed to include the authorization in the stimulus bill, called the payment "a matter of honor." "We have had measure after measure presented. We did so in the proper fashion, and we got filibustered, we got ruled out, and everything else."

The Filipinos had been promised payments for their war service. But Congress passed the so-called Rescission Act in 1946, which withdrew that promise, although veterans were still eligible for U.S. citizenship and some medical benefits.

Rep. Bob Filner, D-Calif., who has fought for the payments for 12 years, said the stimulus bill provision will "recognize the injustice" done to the Filipinos.

The legislation has been big news in the Philippines where President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo issued a statement saying the legislation "culminates the many years of struggle that we have waged."

Franco Arcebal, 85, a vice president of the American Coalition for Filipino Veterans, said it is unfortunate that the bill does not provide payments for the widows of veterans. Of about 400,000 Filipinos who served, about 15,000 are still living—12,000 in the Philippines and 3,000 in United States, according to the coalition.

Some of the veterans would have preferred a monthly pension, Arcebal said, but for others who are aging and possibly in ill health a onetime payment "comes in the nick of time."

Arcebal, who lives in Los Angeles, is organizing a celebration of the bill for Wednesday in Los Angeles, near a statue dedicated to Filipino veterans.

"We've been waiting a long time," he said.

Growth in remittances seen at 3pct. in '09

Citigroup said it was expecting foreign exchange remittances to the Philippines to grow by only 3.0 percent this year because of the adverse impact of job losses and wage cuts overseas.

Last year's remittances from overseas Filipinos through banks amounted to $16.4 billion, up 13.7 percent from 2007, according to central bank data.

Citigroup said it would be difficult to sustain such a robust growth this year because of the global economic turmoil. It noted that the year-on-year growth in December was only 0.8 percent, to $1.4 billion, which indicated that growth this year would be slower than in 2008.

"It's not just incremental growth but the decline in job deployment overseas that could flag remittance weakness," Citigroup said in its latest publication on the Philippines and other emerging markets." We do not rule out potential wage cuts in line with the increasing slack globally on the back of the US job cuts, decline in oil prices that threatens Middle East growth prospects, and global trade collapse in Asia."

Observers quoted by Citigroup said that while recession was concentrated on the United States and the advanced economies in Europe, it affected the profitability of exporters in Asian countries, which partly depend on rich countries for their export income. ***(Philippine Daily Inquirer)***

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR MONEY

Timing the market

It's time in the market, not timing, that counts

Editor's Note: This is a partnership between INQUIRER.net and Citibank to help readers handle their personal finances well.

Question: I've always been fascinated with the stock market but haven't really gone into it. I recently bumped into a high school classmate and he told me that he's now a stockbroker. Although stocks have been down because of the global financial crisis, he told me that stocks are still a good investment for the long run. Is this true? What if I just buy when stocks are low and sell when they are high?—Lito

Answer: Buying low and selling high is one of the great ways to make money in the stock market. That means you buy stocks when their prices are low, and sell them at a profit after some time.

While this seems like a good strategy, it really isn't. According to the book The Citibank Guide to Building Personal Wealth, "In the most developed markets, market timing, which means moving in and out of equities to catch the price rises and avoid the falls, is believed to be a poor strategy for retail investors."

Timing the market is not only unwise, it can also cause anxiety and heart attacks as you need to keep abreast of market movements daily. Besides, no one can accurately predict if stock prices will go up or down and by how much at this time tomorrow. Stocks or equities are highly volatile. It is impossible to time the market perfectly.

Your friend is right in saying that stocks are still a good investment for the long term. Experts have long said so. Checking again with The Citibank Guide to Building Personal Wealth book, "Very long-term performance figures tell us that, as an asset class, equities have produced significantly better returns than cash or bonds. For this reason, people who want their wealth to grow substantially (and are prepared to tolerate large positive and negative price movements) generally allocate part of their assets to holding equities for the long term."

The key words are "long term." Holding some stock investments as part of your investment portfolio will enable you to participate in gains when the market recovers from a low point. You would also be able to take advantage of bargain prices when the market takes a dive.

And to maximize your opportunities, you need to consider peso (or dollar)/cost averaging.

"Dollar/peso cost averaging means making many regular purchases of an investment over a long period of time instead of making a once-only lump sum purchase," explain the authors of The Citibank Guide to Building Personal Wealth. "This reduces the risk that you buy when the market price is high."

By practicing this method, you don't need to worry about whether you are investing at the wrong time. This is because by making smaller regular purchases at different prices, in the long run, your average purchase price will generally be lower than the average price of the investment during the period.

To illustrate, suppose you invest a set amount every year for 10 years in a unit investment trust fund (UITF) dealing in equities. Because UITFs are pooled funds, you get "units" or part of the fund every time you invest. (Mutual funds run by financial institutions operate the same way.) And because equities are volatile, their prices go up and down every day, resulting in different prices per unit every time you invest. After 10 years, if you compute for the average purchase price, you may likely find out that this is lower than the actual average price during the period. This will result in a profit should you decide to sell, even if the price at the end of the period is the same as when you started.

If you have put the same amount of money regularly over the same period in a bank, it is likely that you would earn less than if you invested in an equity UITF as explained above. Bank deposits, though generally safe, yield smaller interest income.

This should not be taken to mean, though, that you should put all your investible funds in equities. Don't put all your eggs in one basket; diversification is the name of the game in investing. Have some of your money in bank deposits, some in bonds (whether directly or through mutual funds or UITFs), some in equities (whether directly or also through mutual funds or UITFs), and more. By following this strategy, you will be spreading the risk and would more often than not stand to gain than if you put all your money in one kind of asset. You would also be able to take part in gains that could be earned in the markets.

Now you might ask how much should you put in each asset class? Talk to an investment specialist to find out your choices on where to put some of your assets given your financial goals and time horizon. Citibank clients can avail of its wealth management services. Non-clients are also welcome to schedule financial check-ups at no cost.

And after you have invested, stay invested for the long term.

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Maharlika – PinoyStyle

Pinoy says Berlin win 'unbelievable'

BY BAYANI SAN DIEGO JR.
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—US-based Filipino animator/filmmaker Arvin Bautista did not expect the triumph of David Lee Miller's "My Suicide" at the 59th Berlinale.

"My Suicide," which features Bautista's work, won the Crystal Bear, the Grand Prize in the Generation 14Plus or youth section of the top-rated festival in the German capital last week.

"We all felt ridiculously lucky to have made it to the festival [in the first place]," Bautista told the Philippine Daily Inquirer in an e-mail interview.

He describes the Berlin audience as "the best … because the film was presented to teenagers who appreciated a movie that spoke directly to them." The Hollywood Reporter tagged "My Suicide" as the fest's "critical hit."

The movie is about a "world-weary teenager" who becomes a celebrity after announcing that he plans to take his own life.

The jury, which consisted of 14- to 18-year-olds, commended the "rare theme." Jury members said they were "fascinated [not only] by the film's gripping content, [but also by] the highly original way … it was made."

(In 2004, Maryo J. de los Reyes' "Magnifico" won the Crystal Bear in Berlinale's Kinderfilmfest or Children's section.)

In an earlier interview with Inquirer, Bautista said he "juggled various styles" for the animation sequences—from cartoony to anime, from 3D to rotoscoping."

News of the win was first relayed to the Inquirer by Bautista's father Levi: "I was in Berlin last weekend to attend the world premiere … Deep in my heart, I knew that the film [had a] very strong [chance of winning]."

Next stop for the indie movie is the South by Southwest Film Festival in Austin, Texas, next month—"Our US debut," said Arvin. "Then, we're off to the GenArt Film Fest in New York and the San Francisco Film Fest." But he said his fondest wish is to screen the film in the Philippines.

Karylle's best Valentine's Day

By DOLLY ANNE CARVAJAL
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Karylle is still in a euphoric state after her first sold-out solo concert. "The success of my show made it the best Valentine's Day for me even if I'm single," she says. "I usually don't like receiving flowers but for some reason, I really liked it this time. My mom gave me wild flowers while Ogie and Regine sent me roses."

K was surrounded by all kinds of flowers before her show when she posed as Maria Makiling for esteemed Filipino painters. The paintings will be auctioned off to raise funds to protect the ecosystem in Mt. Makiling.

"It has about 3,000 species of Philippine flora," K notes. "Ang daming rare flowers doon. We don't have to wait for a calamity to strike to preserve the beauty of nature."

K grew up in Laguna so she has always been enchanted by Makiling. "As a kid, I really believed that she is a woman lying down because of how the mountain looks like."

Was it harder to pose as Makiling or for her sexy Bench billboard? "It was more difficult posing as Makiling. I had to sit still for hours. Kahit mata bawal gumalaw. Projek pa din ako even there were insects biting me."

Ai Ai's 'alas'

Ai Ai de las Alas is quite disappointed that she wasn't named Box Office Queen of the Year even if her movie "Tanging Ina Ninyong Lahat" broke all records. The title was given to Sarah Geronimo instead for "A Very Special Love," her blockbuster hit with John Lloyd Cruz.

"Sana the organizer makes the rules clear," Ai laments. "Di daw umabot sa cut-off date yung movie ko."

But she's happy for Sarah. "Para na rin naman akong may crown kasi "Tanging Ina 2" will be part na of history with its all time high earnings," Ai says. "I'm thankful kasi sambayanang Pilipino na ang nagbigay ng totoong korona sa akin."

That's Ai Ai's real alas.

Clueless?

I cornered Diether Ocampo for his sentiments about the annulment of his marriage to Kristine Hermosa which was granted already.

"I don't know anything," he quips. "But I wanna stay positive. I still believe in marriage." Is it an annulment or a nullification of a union that was void from the start? Over and beyond the technicalities, Diet seems clueless. Doesn't he really know or doesn't he care anymore? Perhaps he is too happy with his new love to be haunted by his past.

Past warm-up stage

I had so much fun interviewing my two fave amigos, Cesar Montano and Dingdong Dantes, for the daily TV show "Chikalectric," which I host with IC on Viva Cinema Channel. Well, I almost forgot it was work.

Pop balladeer Christian Bautista as Tony and Karylle as Maria in the revival of *West Side Story*.

Buboy was about to leave for the United States with his wife Sunshine for their V-day celebration and to seal a deal with Napa Valley to bottle wine for his resto Bellisimo which he will name after his daughters with Shine.

Buboy is a hands-on dad. "I make it a point to play with my kids everyday," he said. "I dread the day they will be dalaga na. Di ata ako papayag na ligawan sila because I know the evil that men can do (laughs)."

From warm to hot?

Dong revealed that he and Marian Rivera are way past the warm-up stage. I teased him. "From warm to hot?" He just flashed his killer smile.

The actor admits that they have pet names for each other which varies from time to time. "Katuwaan lang namin yun. We base it on our roles in our shows. Like when we were doing Dyesebel, I called her Yummy and she called me Daddy."

Does he think that Marian would make wife material? "Definitely," he replied. "For starters, she cooks great adobo." Dong and Marian have all the right ingredients. What's keeping them from mixing it all properly so that they can "serve" their hot romance to the public?

Best for last

A common friend of Ara Mina and mine showed me a sweet picture of Ara and her dashing Chinoy BF. They look blissful. Ara has been through hell and back in the name of l'amour. If the sought-after scion is the final one for her, then love surely saves the best for last.

Guess list

■ Network bigwigs got fed up with an actress' unpredictable working habits. "Pag di nya feel mag taping, bigla na lang siya tatawag na mag pack up even if everybody on the set is ready na," laments a staffer. "Wala siyang consideration for others." So they had no other recourse but to end her show abruptly. They will focus instead on another prized talent who's much younger than the actress. Actress in distress? The staff are stress-free now that they're free of the actress.

■ The staff of a lifestyle show vows never to guest this actor anymore because of his tantrums. "Aside from his talent fee, we paid for his expensive spa treatment which we featured in the show. But he refused to do different poses because pagod na daw siya," an insider reveals. "Hello! Di ba nakaka-relax mag spa?" Actors act up for the strangest of reasons.

Kapamilya awards

ABS-CBN swept the Gandingan's 2009 major awards, garnering the most coveted Best TV Station, Best AM Station, Best FM Station and Best Music Station, which it won for three consecutive years.

The network took home 14 out of the 26 awards including Best News Anchor award for Korina Sanchez and Best Talk Show Host for Boy Abunda. Gandingan is the first and only UP-based awards founded by the UP Community Broadcasters Society. Up na Up talaga ang "career" ng Kapamilyas with the UP recognition.

'Beauty and the best'

PHOTO BY RYAN RAMOS, ABS-CBN

Ruffa on Ai-Ai: "She can teach me how to prepare 'longganisa'; I can give her fashion tips."

By BAYANI SAN DIEGO JR.
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—An alternative title for the new ABS-CBN morning show "Ruffa and Ai," co-host Ai Ai de las Alas says, would be "Beauty and the Best." Which is which? "Pareho kami," Ai Ai quips.

People may wonder what the two have in common. The girls insist they share an unpredictable sense of fun. Ruffa recalls, "On our first day, we kept laughing. Ai Ai finds my favorite expressions hilarious." Ai Ai agrees. "Ruffa keeps saying 'Oh my gosh' and she can stretch 'gosh' for 30 minutes!"

They admit they can learn from one another. "Ai-Ai can teach me how to prepare longganisa; I can give her tips on fashion," notes Ruffa. Ai-Ai jests, "I can also teach Ruffa how to change an alternator."

They currently co-star on "I Love Betty La Fea" and, 15 years ago, they top-billed the sitcom "13, 14, 15." Ruffa recalls, "Ai Ai played yaya to me, Aiko (Melendez) and Carmina (Villaroel)." Ai Ai's version: "I mediated whenever they quarreled off-cam."

A reunion of that cast would be a dream episode for Ruffa, but she admits it's an impossibility "because Carmina hosts rival show 'Sis' on GMA 7."

One thing Ruffa and Ai Ai don't quite agree about is Kris Aquino. Ruffa says she has no problem with Kris, but Ai Ai differs: "If Kris guested on the show, I'd be absent. In the same way that, if Yilmaz Bektas were to guest, Ruffa would probably be a no-show."

Only a man she can learn from will do

By MARINEL CRUZ
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—"It would be nice to grow old with someone. There have been several guys but I didn't consider any one of them to be a lifetime partner," said multiawarded broadcaster Mel Tiangco, who has remained single since her separation from the father of her four kids.

Carmela Tiangco is mother to Wency, Joe Mike, Ana Teresa and Melanie. "Now that they have families of their own, I have more time for myself," Mel told Inquirer over lunch at the GMA 7 offices recently. "I love going to concerts [and] treating myself to weekends at the spa. And yes, I date."

She hopes to meet "somebody who is honest and upfront. I also like a guy I can learn from."

The early evening news program that Mel co-anchors with Mike Enriquez, "24 Oras," recently bagged the 2009 New York Festivals Gold Medal for reporter Jiggy Manicad's story on Angelo Abeto, the marine corporal who died after his team was ambushed by the Abu Sayyaf in Tipo-tipo, Basilan last year.

For its coverage of the Lanao del Norte attacks last August, it also won the Silver World Medal for Best Newscast.

Maharlika – Opinyon

EDITORIAL

'Better than nothing'

It is humiliating for a veteran, let alone a Filipino veteran of World War II, to see his service in the United States military reduced to dollars and cents. But that is the result of a six-decade-long struggle that the United States itself caused—and that may have come to an end only the other day, when US President Barack Obama signed his $787-billion stimulus program into law.

The massive spending-and-tax-cuts law includes an appropriation of $198 million for payment of lump sums to Filipino veterans of the US Armed Forces in the Far East—some 18,000 out of an estimated 200,000 at the end of the war—who are still alive. Veterans who had opted to become American citizens will receive $15,000, and those who did not will receive $9,000, or less than half a million pesos.

"It's better than nothing," 81-year-old Manuel B. Braga told *The New York Times*. The *Times* described Braga as "a guerilla fighter in the Philippine jungles [who] now lives near San Diego," in California.

If the lump-sum amounts are weighed by the scales of history, not those of politics, which can measure only the limits of the possible, the sums are indeed better than nothing—but not by much. At a time of great peril, Filipinos joined American soldiers in defending the Philippines, then a US colony. When the US soldiers returned home and received generous benefits, it was only a simple matter of fairness that their Filipino comrades in arms, who fought the same enemy and died in the same battles as the Americans, or endured the same ghastly march from Bataan and suffered the same prison of war, receive the same benefits.

The Rescission Act of 1946 put paid to that; in one stroke (of US President Harry Truman's pen), it stripped Filipino soldiers of their status as US military veterans. In the six decades since, Filipino veterans fought valiantly for US recognition (if not American gratitude) and won a few important victories, including a belated option to immigrate to the United States. But the very attempt to undo the damage of the Rescission Act narrowed the veterans' struggle, in the view of the US Congress, to money matters alone.

Due credit must be given to the redoubtable US Sen. Daniel Inouye, himself a World War II veteran (but in the European theater of war). It was Inouye, a staunch supporter of Filipino veterans' rights, who inserted the appropriation into the US Senate's version of the bill, and ensured that the provision would survive the conference committee.

Inouye said the appropriation allowed Americans to "close a dark chapter in the history of this country." A statement he released during the congressional debates read in part: "This nation made a solemn promise, and with hardly a hearing, we revoked it. This episode is a blight upon the character of the United States, and it must be cleansed."

After 60 years, and in the dim light of the worst economic downturn since the war itself, a modest lump sum can still pack an emotional wallop. We guess most veterans will welcome this belated gesture from the government they used to serve; the disappointment is probably keenest among those who did not have the chance to serve.

Still, a nagging question remains: Why the difference in lump sums? Those veterans who chose to remain in the Philippines—didn't they fight the same war?

© Philippine Daily Inquirer

Whistleblowers

You blow the whistle and, alerted to a crime, government comes bearing down hard on you. Since Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo took power nine years ago, that has been the story of government's fight against corruption, which accounts for its current score: Corruption, 10; Fight, Zero. Among the high-profile whistleblowers who suffered this fate were:

Acsa Ramirez. She was the cashier at the government-owned Land Bank of the Philippines who exposed a multimillion-peso tax scam by officials at the LandBank Binangonan branch. Presented in a meet-the-press along with those she blew the whistle on, she was mistakenly lumped together with the suspects by Arroyo.

The mistake could easily have been corrected, but Arroyo who wore a mantle of infallibility, instead ordered National Bureau of Investigation Director Reynaldo Wycoco to find evidence linking Ramirez to the crime. Naturally, he found nothing, but he made sure Ramirez found her life over the next few years a living hell. Ms Arroyo (much) later made a show of relenting, hugging Ramirez and saying, "I can understand your anguish." What went through Ramirez's head when she heard this, we can only guess. The real anguish was that she could not put it out in print, given the newspapers' rules on what is printable.

Francisco Gudani and Alexander Balutan. They exposed the wholesale electoral fraud that took place under their watch in Muslim Mindanao, defying an order from Ms Arroyo that no one might speak out against her without her express consent. For their pains, they were stripped of their rank and honor and court-martialed. Now a free man, Gudani has discovered God, the one in heaven and not the one in Malacañang, while Balutan remains in jail, every day rediscovering true courage. Whatever happened to the people they blew the whistle on? Arroyo claims to be the president of the Philippines while her husband claims to be a gentleman and a first at that—claims that no one believes.

There's The Rub
By CONRADO DE QUIROS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Ed Panlilio. He's the governor of Pampanga province who won against impossible odds, or against opponents associated with epic gambling and racketeering, by the Cabalen [Pampanga province-mate] voters' version of people power. Overnight he raised his province's tax revenues from quarrying 30 times, without quarrying adding production, simply with him subtracting from corruption. Coming from a meeting in Malacañang, he had P500,000 dropped on his lap by a Malacañang official to donate to charity, which Malacañang presumes to begin at home. He promptly reported it to the public, the photograph of him showing all the cash now iconic, the almost impossible picture of an honest Filipino public official.

For his pains, his political enemies ganged up on him and tried to oust him, a move backed or engineered, by Malacañang, ironclad proof of which being its staunch denials. They cited his incapacity to govern, their logic being that honesty is an irremediable impediment to governance. Then when his enemies were near to accomplishing their deed, they suddenly stopped. One can only guess that Malacañang woke up to the realization that if a mob can oust a governor that got duly elected by people power, people power can oust a president that got unduly shoved in by a mob. With government buffeted no end by scandal, it didn't do to slip that thought to the public mind.

Jun Lozada. He remains a gaping wound in the heart of this country.

Comes now the World Bank, and this time around we can't be more happier, however ungrammatical that is. For the first time, government has taken on a whistleblower it cannot bully. Unlike Ramirez, they cannot hound the World Bank because they made a mistake; unlike Gudani and Balutan, they cannot court-martial the World Bank for damning the First Couple without its permission in triplicate; unlike Panlilio, they cannot oust the World Bank for treating public money as though it belonged to the public; unlike Lozada, they cannot persecute the World Bank with trumped-up charges for telling the truth.

The opposite is true. It's the World Bank that can have the Arroyo government haled before the real court of law, which is world public opinion, quite apart from that of the world's lending institutions, and not the World Bank in Miriam Santiago's kangaroo court. Miriam may strut and fret her hour upon the stage, but hers is but a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury signifying nothing. Why should the World Bank want to have anything to do with the proceedings of a government it has classified as the most corrupt in East Asia? Why should the World Bank want to have anything to do with a hearing conducted by someone whose English is more incomprehensible than her ethics? Why should the World Bank agree to be dragged to the cesspool when it can shine a light on the cesspool and show it for what it is?

It was Gregoria de Jesus, Andres Bonifacio's wife, who told her husband's executioners that one day the truth will out (it always does) like the bodies of the drowned yielded up by the sea.

As truth's perverters have always found out, that's only too true.

The execution of Gomburza

People often forget the bloody history of Rizal Park, also known as the Luneta. We all know that Jose Rizal was executed there (but not everyone knows the monument does not mark the exact spot where he fell). Aside from Rizal, over a hundred others were executed in this place then known as Bagumbayan. Either they were shot in the back or dispatched using the garrote, a terrifying instrument we now associate with Mariano Gomez, Jose Burgos and Jacinto Zamora, known collectively as Gomburza.

Tuesday was the 137th anniversary of the execution of Gomburza, so I found myself in front of the badly designed, squat, white obelisk near the Rizal monument that marks the spot where the three priests were executed. Most visitors to Rizal Park overlook this historical marker unless they take the time to read and contemplate the various markers installed on and around the obelisk. The Knights of Columbus take credit for marking this spot, based on the recollections of eyewitnesses to the execution. There is another marker, in Spanish, that explains the significance of the place.

Looking Back
By AMBETH OCAMPO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

However, these are two flawed markers, installed about a decade ago, that should be replaced immediately. These markers go beyond history and play on the reader's emotions rather than simply providing the facts. Both markers are wrong to state that the garrote killed by strangulation.

I don't know whose fanciful imagination brought about the marker complete with an image of the garrote that reads in part, "[Gomburza] were executed by strangulation—by using a vile device consisting of an iron collar which the executioner tightened slowly until the martyrs met death."

That is far from the truth. In almost all civilized societies where capital punishment is imposed, the object is to dispatch the condemned as quickly as possible. To produce and prolong pain is considered "cruel and unusual punishment." If animals for slaughter are not made to suffer very much, what more condemned humans? Garrote iron collars were tightened on the victim's neck not to strangle, but rather to insure that with one twist of the handle the neck was broken, causing swift and, in principle, painless death. Unfortunately, nobody has survived to let us know if this is indeed the case.

We also forget that on Feb. 17, 1872, four men—not three—were executed in Bagumbayan. Saldua was the man who implicated the three priests in the Cavite Mutiny in exchange for pardon. On the walk up the scaffold Burgos was said to be crying like a child, while Gomez and Zamora were rather recollected. Saldua walked happily, confident that the governor's messenger would arrive at the scene on a horse carrying his pardon. When Saldua stood on the platform, he looked around vainly for the messenger that never came, and he got what he deserved and was killed first.

Gomez, at 73, was the oldest of the three priests. He blessed people on the way and is quoted to have said, "Not a single leaf can move except at the will of the Divine Creator. Since it is His will that I die at this place, may His will be done."

Zamora ascended the platform without a word. This was not courage or calm in the face of death; he had suffered a nervous breakdown two days earlier. It could be said that he was already dead even before the garrote did him in.

Burgos was executed last and, having witnessed three deaths ahead, his was the most difficult death. After he sat on the garrote, he stood up and shouted, "What crime have I committed to die in this manner? Is there no justice on earth?"

Twelve friars then came and pushed him back into the seat. But after a bit of a struggle, he managed to stand up again and shouted, "But I am innocent. I have not committed any crime."

One of the friars hissed, "Even Jesus Christ was without sin."

That did the trick. Burgos then sat and accepted the inevitable.

Before the hood was placed on Burgos' head, the executioner knelt before him and asked his forgiveness. Burgos blessed him saying, "I forgive you, my son. Perform your duty."

So moved was the crowd that they too knelt on the ground and crossed themselves. Then when all were executed, a tension in the air caused some Spaniards to worry about a rebellion. They ran toward Intramuros for safety and a minor stampede occurred, leaving many injured. The commotion stopped when the governor-general emerged from Intramuros with trumpet fanfare, followed by soldiers who had been put on alert that morning expecting a rebellion.

Edmond Plauchut was a Frenchman in the Philippines at the time and claims to have witnessed the Gomburza execution in 1872. I find his narrative a bit dramatic and wonder whether the words as given above were really made by Gomez and Burgos. It may be less historical but it does make a good story. So good a story in fact that the newspaper *La Solidaridad* printed a Spanish version translated from the original French in its issue for Feb. 15, 1892, to mark the 20th anniversary of the execution that produced an age best described by the historian O.D. Corpuz as influenced by the "Terror of 1872."

Over a century later, we hope more people will remember, especially the Filipino clergy today who owe a lot to Gomburza. Remember, too, Bagumbayan, now Rizal Park, fertilized by the blood of our heroes.

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu.

Maharlika–Samu't Sari

How 'TNTs' can enlist for 2010 polls

DFA denies blackmail in lieu of registration

MANILA, Philippines—Filipinos overseas whose immigration status in their host country is irregular like the so-called "tago ng tago" (TNT, always hiding) need to bring only some form of identification so that they can be enlisted for the 2010 national and senatorial elections, Elections Commissioner Nicodemo Ferrer said.

"The passport is an important source of identification. The important thing is an evidence to establish their identity," he said.

In a related development, foreign affairs spokesman Bayani Mangibin denied reports that the Department of Foreign Affairs and its posts here and abroad are forcing overseas Filipinos to register for the overseas absentee voting (OAV) by blackmailing them and withholding their passport applications until they register. He also denied that a registration fee of P75 is charged for every applicant.

"We deny that. That is not true," he said of the reports.

However, Mangibin admitted that some DFA personnel try to convince OFWs to register, but only because they feel that it is every Filipino's civic duty to participate in the electoral process.

Documented OFWs are those with a valid employment contract that passed through the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration.

"Whether documented or not, we treat all Filipinos abroad equally, although for the undocumented, we usually try to convince them to regularize their stay abroad," he said.

But Ronnie Abeto, a Filipino who works in Saudi Arabia and helps fellow Filipinos in trouble, said employers of Filipino household service workers usually hold the latter's passports for the duration of the employment.

Mangibin, who was previously posted as ambassador to Libya, said the Philippine embassy in Tripoli issues an embassy ID card to every Filipino who registers with them as soon as they arrive there. He suggested that Filipinos elsewhere go to the nearest agency register their presence there.

"Even without a passport, an undocumented Filipino worker can go to the embassy or the Philippine Overseas Labor Office for proper representation," he said. Both offices can then issue a certification of identity which can be used to enlist for the 2010 elections.

Mangibin also belied the impression that once undocumented OFWs go to the embassy, their status would be revealed to authorities of the host country so that they would be deported back to the Philippines.

"Hindi kami nagsusumbong (We don't tell on them). In fact, we facilitate their regularization when the host government implements their amnesty program for irregular migrants," he said.

The OAV registration has already started February 1 and will end August 31, 2009. The Commission on Elections and the DFA's OAV Secretariat are targeting some 600,000 more to register, so that a total of one million will be on the list of OAV voters by election time. ***(INQUIRER.net)***

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER
Fr. Ryan Jimenez of Mount Carmel Church, left, and Pastor Roger and Teresita Abe, right, pose with other pastors and couple Nicolas and Margarita Muna during the Worldwide Marriage Encounter Rally held at the American Memorial Park amphitheater on Feb. 7, 2009.
REY BELGADO

VALENTINE WALK REY BELGADO
Tan Holdings officers and employees join the "Men's Project: Stepping Up to the Plate" Valentine walk held along Beach Road on Feb. 13, 2009.

THREE BABY BOYS AND A BABY GIRL CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Mikaela Alexia Q. Rabago, third left, with playmates during a recent picnic at American Memorial Park.

WEEKEND BARBECUE CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Elite Printing employees pose for a photo during a weekend picnic at American Memorial Park.

Illegal migration may worsen, says UN

By RONNEL W. DOMINGO and JEROME ANING
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—The global financial crisis may worsen illegal migration among Southeast Asian workers, as those who lost jobs at home are pressed to look for work abroad while those who were laid off overseas return to their countries, according to the United Nations.

The National Economic and Development Authority nevertheless believes that the inflow of remittances from overseas Filipino workers would remain strong because they remain relatively safe from the effects of the crisis.

In a joint statement with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Secretariat, the UN warned of narrowing options for formal migration in view of the growing protectionist stance of some countries.

"Migrants abroad may face increasingly difficult conditions, with fewer employment opportunities and may encounter greater discrimination and stigmatization," said Gwi-Yeop Son, the UN Resident Coordinator in Thailand.

Son made the statement in the wake of the High Level Multi-Stakeholder Dialog on HIV Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support for Migrants in the Asean Region, a gathering of high-ranking government officials held last week in Bangkok, Thailand.

"The financial crisis and multi-billion dollar economic stimulus packages being put forward must not forget the faces and voices of migrants and mobile populations who are among the most vulnerable," Son said.

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Ralph G. Recto said that few OFWs worked in the financial and construction sectors, which were the hardest hit, especially in the United States.

Based on preliminary data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, remittances reached $16.4 billion in 2008, an increase of 13.7 percent from $14.5 billion the previous year.

"This is above the original 10 percent growth target," Recto said, adding that demand for OFWs remained high.

"In the Middle East there is still a big demand for engineers, architects, interior designers, and construction workers because of the building boom," he said. "And there is new demand from emerging labor markets like South Australia, New Zealand, and Guam."

A migrant group said on Wednesday that the government should see to it that labor rights of Filipino workers here and abroad would be upheld despite the massive layoffs and new work arrangements being enforced amid the global economic crisis.

Migrante International joined the Kilusang Mayo Uno in protesting the allegedly illegal dismissals of workers here and abroad.

YoungStyle

Learning the US Presidents, in order

AP

Then President George W. Bush poses with then President-elect Barack Obama, and former presidents, from left, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton and Jimmy Carter, Wednesday, Jan. 7, 2009, in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington.

By VALERIE STRAUSS
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—Monday was Presidents' Day, a holiday that began as a tribute to the first U.S. president, George Washington. In fact, in some places it is still called Washington's Birthday, and that is the official name still recognized by the federal government.

The day became a government holiday in 1885. It was celebrated on Feb. 22, which is Washington's actual birthday.

In 1971, the holiday was moved to the third Monday in February. Though it's still officially Washington's Birthday, the day has become known as Presidents' Day to recognize both Washington and Lincoln.

Of course, we don't need a holiday to remind us of the accomplishments of those giants of American history. But what about the other presidents? Barack Obama is the 44th president of the United States (though he is the 43rd man to be president, because Grover Cleveland was the 22nd and 24th). That's a lot of names to remember.

Memory experts say there are tricks that can help you remember information.

One way is to break up information into groups, which is called "chunking." You could memorize states by region, for example, and the presidents by historical era: the earliest years, pre-Civil War, Reconstruction.

Or you could use what is called a "mnemonic device" (pronounced ni-MAH-nik). It's any kind of formula to help you remember. For example, if you want to remember the planets in order from the sun, think: "My Very Educated Mother Just Served Us Nine Pizzas." The first letter of each word is the first letter of the planet: Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto (if you still count Pluto as a planet).

Make up your own device for the presidents. Start with the first seven: Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Adams and Jackson. How about: "Will And Jeff Made Many Awful Jokes!"

If none of this works, you can learn "The American Presidents" song.

It was created by Genevieve Madeline Ryan, 19, of Potomac, Md., now a student at Princeton University. When she was 12 or 13, her dad asked her to memorize the order of the presidents as a Father's Day gift. With the help of presidential historian Hugh Sidey, she came up with rhymes to help her remember. She then got former National Symphony Orchestra conductor Leonard Slatkin to help her put her rhymes to music.

You can hear the song and see a visual presentation by going to the White House Historical Society's Web site, www.whitehousehistory.org, and clicking on "The American Presidents." There is lots of other information on U.S. history there, too.

The song starts:

"America's president number one,
"Founding Father Washington.
"John Adams, second president,
"The very first White House resident"
And it ends:
"George W. Bush, number forty-three,
"Strengthened Homeland Security.
"First to be elected of African descent,
"Obama our Forty-Fourth President."

PRESIDENTIAL BIRTHDAYS FACT

(c) 2009, The Washington Post

Four U.S. presidents have February birthdays: Ronald Reagan (Feb. 6, 1911), Abraham Lincoln (Feb. 12, 1809), William Henry Harrison (Feb. 9, 1773) and George Washington (Feb. 22, 1732).

IN REMEMBRANCE

ALBERT SONGAO TOVES JR.

December 30, 1950 — February 15, 2009

Predeceased by:
Father: Albert Manglona Toves
Mother: Carmen Songao Toves
Son: Shively John Matagolai Toves

Father & Mother-in-law:
Simeon, Rufina P. Matagolai

Sisters & Brothers-in-law:
Domingo Q. Atalig
Juan Aldan
Eugenia M. Facio C. Pangelinan
Pedro A. Lizama
Ignacia T. Sahagon
Jesus S. Pangelinan
Jesus P. Matagolai
Serafin P. Matagolai
Fermin M. Quitugua

Survived by:
Wife: Carmen Matagolai Toves
Children/Spouses and Grandchildren:
Barrie Cuthbert/Noreen Sablan Toves: *(Albert Herman, Barry Cuthbert Jr., Bianca Shai, Hannah Rhys, Matua.)*
Albert III./Jesilin Castro Toves: *(Kyle, Albert IV., Prince Jesse, Jesus Emanuel)*
Joella Jordine Toves/Wayne Crisostomo: *(Saniva, Khalil, Warren, Krisanto, Galen, Shaina, Franny Saianne)*
Sonya Toves/Jeffrey L. Manglona: *(Shively Jeff, Rita Mae, Jeffrey II., Jacob)*

Brother & Sisters:
Rita T. Atalig
Francisco S./Juliana M. Toves
Ana T. Aldan
Lourdes T./Fidel M. Manglona
Josephine T./Antonio Gomez
Elizabeth S. Toves/Chona Rayos
Rosalina T./Ramon Cabrera
Esperanza T./Luzon Cruz
Andrea T./Mark Kapileo
Linda Toves

Sisters & Brothers-in-law:
Remedio M. Shagon
Caridad M. Pangelinan
Cecilia P. Matagolai
Vicente P./Remedio C. Matagolai
Luisa Matagolai-Quitugua
Bernie R./Henry Rabauliman
Juanita P. Matagolai/Yoseng Lucio
Maria M. Jones (Kirie)/Bino Jones

Daily Mass is being offered at San Isidro Church in Rota at 7:00 p.m. followed by Rosary at 6:00 p.m. at San Antonio Church in Saipan, 7:00 p.m. at St. Anthony Church in Guam.

On Monday, February 23, 2009, his remains will be escorted from Rota Health Center at 7:30 a.m. to San Francisco De Borja Church, Rota.

Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11:00 a.m. followed by interment at San Jose Cemetery in Rota.

Thank you for your thoughts and prayers.

Wife, Children and Family

In Central Asia, helping kids for peace

By VALERIE STRAUSS
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

Imagine that you are climbing down the world's second-largest mountain, and suddenly you realize you are lost and alone. You have no water and only one protein bar. And you haven't taken a shower for three months!

That's what happened to Greg Mortenson.

At that moment, he began an adventure that changed his life—and the lives of countless people in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

It all started when Mortenson decided to climb Pakistan's K2 mountain in 1993 to honor his sister Christa, who had died from epilepsy.

But the 28,251-foot-high mountain was tough. Five of 12 climbers in his expedition died on the way down. Mortenson never made it to the top, got lost in the Karakoram Mountains and stumbled into the Pakistani village of Korphe.

THE WASHINGTON POST

Greg Mortenson with schoolchildren in Afghanistan, one of the Central Asian countries where he has helped improved education.

The people of the village were so poor that children used sticks to write out school lessons in the dirt. Their parents could not afford $1 a day for a full-time teacher.

The villagers saved his life. Over tea with village chief Haji Ali, Mortenson said, he learned many life lessons—and this custom:

"Haji Ali told me, `If you want to do business here, take three cups of tea. The first cup, you are a stranger. The second cup, a friend. The third cup, you become family.' "

Mortenson became very close to the villagers and wanted to repay their kindness.

He returned to the United States and raised money to build a school by telling Americans about Korphe. He got help from kids at Westside Elementary School in River Falls, Wisconsin. They donated 62,380 pennies from their banks after he visited their school.

And that started Pennies for Peace, a program that teaches kids about giving to others (a practice known as philanthropy) and about cultures. It is now in many schools. (Learn more at www.penniesforpeace.org.)

"The kids learn that they can make a difference and that even a penny can help," Mortenson said.

Since 1996, Mortenson has built about 80 schools in poor and sometimes violent areas of Central Asian countries. His goal: to help bring peace, one school at a time.

"Education is the key to making the world a better place," he said. "Empowering people through education is the best way to fight terrorism."

Mortenson said he came to realize how important it is to educate girls. Why? Because, he said, girls use what they have learned to improve life in their home villages far more than boys do.

"Unless the girls are educated, the society won't change," he said.

Mortenson has endured a lot of hardship in his work.

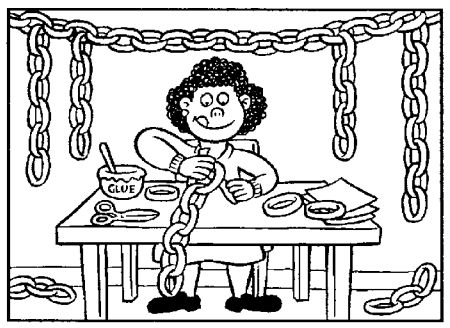
He once was kidnapped and held for eight days by armed Afghan militants. He survived a battle between Afghan warlords by hiding under animal skins in a truck. And he spends half of each year away from his wife and two children.

Mortenson first told his story in a book called "Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace ... One School at a Time," which became a best-seller.

Now he is publishing two new versions: a young reader's edition for kids age 8 and older, and a picture book for kids ages 4 to 8 titled "Listen to the Wind." All three versions tell about Mortenson's life.

He was born in Minnesota and grew up in the African country of Tanzania. There his dad founded a medical center and his mom started a school. He always liked to help people, and he became a nurse.

Then he found his way to Korphe—and that, he says, is where he really found himself.



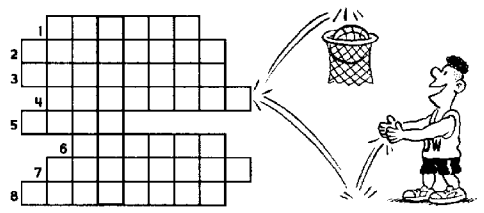
MAVIS LOVES TO MAKE PAPER CHAIN DECORATIONS. See how many paper links you can count in the above drawing.

Answer: We found 58. How about you?

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

DON'T THROW AN AIR BALL SOLVING THIS ONE



Illustrated by David Coulson

Sink the following eight words and win the game. In the grid there is room to enter eight words or terms pertaining to basketball. The following hints should help you dribble to victory.

1. A credit for scoring.
2. For some, a sure point maker.
3. You can't play without them.
4. Shooting while in the air.
5. To pass the ball.
6. What teams need to win.
7. To score off the backboard.
8. To shoot over your head.

There is a dark frame around one of the columns in our grid. If you correctly solve the puzzle, the letters in the frame, top to bottom, will spell out the name of a spectacular shot.

Answers: 1. Assist. 2. Foul shot. 3. Sneakers. 4. Jump shot. 5. Feed. 6. Hustle. 7. Bank shot. 8. Hook shot. The dark framed column spells "Slam dunk."

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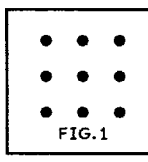


A NEAT WAGER! Draw nine dots on a sheet of paper (Fig. 1). Challenge your friends to connect them up by drawing four straight lines through them without lifting the pencil from the paper. (See Fig. 2 for solution.)

FIG. 1

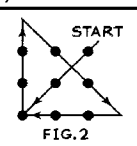
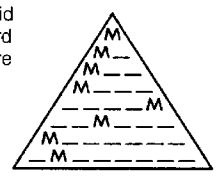


FIG. 2

THE "M" PYRAMID! As you move down the word pyramid shown here, each word contains the same letters as the word above it, plus a new letter. We give you all the M's. Here are some hints from the top down:

1. Roman numeral for 1000.
2. Rebus for "none left."
3. Found in a wrestling ring.
4. A radio antenna.
5. A source of power.
6. Poorest excuse.
7. Short-handled hammers.
8. Baby Bear's bed.



Answers: The words are: M, MT (empty), mat, mast, steam, lamest, mallets, smallest.

Strange BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

■ It was Herb Caen, Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist for the San Francisco Chronicle, who made the following sage observation: "Cockroaches and socialites are the only things that can stay up all night and eat anything."

■ The oldest man in the United States is George Francis, who was born on June 6, 1896, which means he was already nearly 50 years old when D-Day occurred. In an interesting coincidence, the United Kingdom's oldest man, Henry Allingham, is also 112 years old—and was born on the exact same day of the exact same year.

■ Do you suffer from metathesiophobia? That's the scientific appellation given to the fear of change.

■ In 2007, one of the justices serving on the Virginia Supreme Court ordered a plaintiff to drop her pants in court. The purpose was to look at an injury on her leg that was relevant to the case at hand; however, the order was deemed inappropriate and the offending justice was removed from the bench.

■ Every single day, across the globe, there are more than 200 million Internet searches conducted on Google's search engine.

■ If you are like the average American man, over the course of your lifetime you will spend a grand total of five years in the simple act of shaving. No word in the record at hand of how long women spend on the same chore, taking into account the fact that the real estate they cover in their shaving duties is, generally speaking, larger than that covered by men.

■ If you take into account all the sales in the world, there are approximately 50 Bibles sold every minute.

■ ■ ■

Thought for the Day: "Not every story has explosions and car chases. That's why they have nudity and espionage."—Bill Barnes and Gene Ambaum

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MAGIC MAZE ● MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE G20

Y	L	J	G	D	A	X	V	S	I	P	N	K	I	F
C	A	X	V	S	Q	O	L	J	A	D	A	N	A	C
H	E	C	A	A	I	D	N	I	L	I	U	X	V	T
R	P	N	N	L	J	Y	L	O	H	I	S	A	F	D
B	Y	I	E	C	N	A	R	F	C	X	Z	S	S	V
T	H	R	P	A	R	G	E	N	T	I	N	A	U	O
C	M	K	M	T	I	J	Y	G	E	D	X	B	R	R
Z	X	R	S	W	U	A	L	T	U	R	K	E	Y	B
T	E	U	R	Q	O	P	A	N	L	J	I	G	M	F
G	A	D	S	E	T	A	T	S	D	E	T	I	N	U
C	A	M	O	D	G	N	I	K	D	E	T	I	N	U

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Argentina	China	Italy	Turkey
Australia	France	Japan	United Kingdom
Brazil	Germany	Mexico	United States
Canada	India	Russia	

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	+		÷		5
−		÷		−	
	−		x		4
x		+		x	
	+		÷		3
9		8		5	

2 3 4 5 6 6 7 8 9

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MAGIC MAZE ANSWER

GO FIGURE ANSWER

	5		8		9
3	5	÷	6	+	9
	x		+		x
4	2	x	4	−	6
	−		÷		−
5	3	÷	8	+	7

Vacation home or kennel?

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: When I'm staying in a rental home at the coast, where is the best place for my dog, "Riley," to stay: the rental home or a kennel close by?—Todd Y., Neotsu, Ore.

DEAR TODD: If you're bringing your dog on vacation with you (which is fantastic, by the way), he should stay with you if at all possible. A kennel tends to be a stressful place for dogs, even if you come to pick him up every day. If you're vacationing in an unfamiliar place, you may not know how well the kennel is run, if the dogs that stay there are kept healthy and happy, and if illnesses like kennel cough are kept to a minimum.

Riley will benefit from his owner being with him in an unfamiliar place, particularly at night. So, Riley should stay with you. If you're bringing him on vacation, he should experience the vacation with you.

A caveat, however: always get clearance from the rental home's owner before bringing a pet. Vacation-rental agreements often stipulate that no pets are allowed in the house. This happens, sadly, because not all pet owners control their pets, and damage can be done to the rental property.

Many rentals that allow pets will charge an extra fee, sometimes per pet, to cover any potential damages. The fee is usually nonrefundable—but in my experience it's much cheaper than the cost of keeping your pet in a reputable kennel.

If the vacation rental you're considering does not allow pets, look for another house in the area. Several sites on the Internet list pet-friendly rentals, including Oregon.com (http://www.oregon.com/lodging/pet_friendly.cfm); HomeAway.com (http://www.homeaway.com/index.cfm/tgt/oregon-pet-friendly-vacation-rentals); and DogFriendly.com (http://www.dogfriendly.com/server/travel/guides/us/usstateOR.shtml).

■ ■ ■

Send your tips, questions and comments to Paw's Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or e-mail them to pawscorner@hotmail.com.

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Ice cakes for winter birthday fun

During a recent subzero cold snap, the daily temperatures in Minnesota were so miserable that not even my most jovial friends could crack a smile through the numbing wind chill. With my husband's birthday right in the middle of the worst of days, the cold weather inadvertently became the inspiration for an unusual birthday cake.

I left Betty Crocker mixes on the shelf, and instead rooted through cupboards and closets searching for rarely used Bundt and angel-food cake pans, along with mismatched tin tartlet moulds. I filled them all with tap water, put them outside to "freeze" and set the kitchen timer for 10 hours.

When the buzzer went off, I donned oven mitts and a down coat and went outside with an ice pick to test if they were "done." Perfectly frozen, I lugged them inside to the kitchen sink, ran water over the pans for a few seconds, and smiled as the ice slid out with a thud in beautiful shapes.

I lugged the molded ice shapes back outside on a tray and, like a kid in a sandbox, scooped cupfuls of snow and spread it between the ice layers like "icing," with the hope that this multitiered creation wasn't going to be the ultimate ice folly.

So there I was, alone in my backyard, pondering the day, as I set a single candle on the top tier of an ice cake. Instead of the usual clamor of kids participating in the creative fun, it was the kid inside me that became the joyful and unexpected "icing on the cake" that day. Slice of ice, anyone?

Note: To make a whimsical ice cake in a warmer climate, freeze water in a bundt cake pan in your freezer. Remove ice cake from pan and set on a tray with rims to catch melting ice. Display on a buffet dessert table with fresh fruit.

"The grandkids are coming" tip: If you live in snow country, make snow cakes and sculptures together. Choose nonstick cake and gelatin molds in interesting shapes. Head outside after a snowfall and scoop the fresh snow inside the containers, packing it down, just as you would with wet sand when building sandcastles at the beach.

Tap the bottom of each pan to release the shapes. If you wish to stack them to create a "snow cake," spritz water between layers to freeze them in place.

■ ■ ■

Donna Erickson's award-winning television series "Donna's Day" airs on public television nationwide. Visit www.donnasday.com to find out when it airs on your local PBS station and to sign up for Donna's e-newsletter.

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Life & Style

NY Post apologizes—to some—over monkey cartoon

NEW YORK (AP)—After two days of protests, the New York Post apologized Thursday for a cartoon that some have interpreted as comparing President Barack Obama to a violent chimpanzee gunned down by police. But the newspaper also said its longtime antagonists exploited the image for revenge.

The qualified apology didn't mollify at least some of the cartoon's critics, who said they might continue protesting Friday.

The newspaper posted an editorial on its Web site Thursday evening saying the cartoon was meant to mock the federal economic stimulus bill, but "to those who were offended by the image, we apologize."

The piece was posted hours after 200 picketers chanting "Boycott the Post! Shut it down!" marched in front of the paper's office, saying the cartoon echoed racist stereotypes of blacks as monkeys.

The editorial said that "most certainly was not its intent," adding that some media and public figures who have longstanding differences with the paper saw the cartoon "as an opportunity for payback."

Calling them "opportunists," the editorial said: "To them, no apology is due."

The Rev. Al Sharpton, who helped lead the outcry over the cartoon, criticized what he called the paper's "conditional statement" of regret.

"Though we think it is the right thing for them to apologize to those they offended, they seem to want to blame the offense on those (who) raised the issue, rather than take responsibility for what they did," he said in a statement.

The tabloid, owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corp., is known for its feisty attitude, provocative headlines and conservative outlook—a mix that has garnered hundreds of thousands of readers, but also criticism over the years.

The newspaper had stood by the cartoon, which its editor called "a clear parody" about the death of Travis, the chimp that Connecticut police killed Monday after it mauled a friend of its owner. Editor-in-chief Col Allan had said the intent was to ridicule Washington's efforts to revive the economy.

The drawing by longtime Post cartoonist Sean Delonas, published Wednesday, shows a dead chimp and two police officers, one with a smoking gun. The caption reads, "They'll have to find someone else to write the next stimulus bill."

The Post was picketed and deluged with angry calls, with some of Thursday's marchers carrying signs that said "Jail Billionaire N.Y. Post Owner Rupert Murdoch."

"We make them and we break them with our money, and we should shut it down," said protester Angela Brown, who carried a glossy photo of Obama.

Some protesters said the cartoon not only underscored racist tropes but even suggested that Obama should be shot.

"Since when can you call for the killing of the president of the United States?" demanded City Councilman Charles Barron.

Image counts for 'AI' singers; a widower's burden

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Image counts on "American Idol," and the first three finalists know it.

Michael Sarver, 27, an oil-rig worker from Jasper, Texas, said that being a "hardworking American" is part of his appeal, "especially in the economy and the day that we live."

"It's a chance to see someone rise from the ashes. Not that my life is bad, but things are tough," said Sarver, citing oil industry layoffs and hiring freezes.

Sarver joined Danny Gokey and Alexis Grace, selected by viewers this week for the show's ultimate top 12, in a teleconference Thursday.

Gokey, 28, who lost his wife, Sophia, to a congenital heart defect, said he worries that the audience might grow weary of hearing about his tragedy.

"It's only been seven months since she passed," Gokey said. "It's not that I throw it in people's faces but I get asked about it all the time. ... I apologize to everybody if it feels like it's shoved down their face, but it's so fresh in my mind."

He doesn't carry a reminder of her onstage, he said, "because she's so deeply ingrained in my heart and mind that she's part of who I am." His "spunky" wife would be happy for him, said Gokey, a church music director from Milwaukee.

For Grace, 21, a single mom from Memphis, Tenn., her image literally was the issue: The petite, sweet-faced blonde was advised during her first audition to "dirty up" her look, and she responded with a sexier wardrobe and hair.

"I kind of like the whole '60s soul, cocktail-dress kind of vibe thing," said Grace, who admitted reluctantly ("Most girls wouldn't like this question") to being just under 5-foot-tall and weighing shy of 100 pounds.

AP

In this image released by Fox, "American Idol" contestant Alexis Grace is shown.

Asked how she came out of her shell so quickly, she said, "I think I might have a little alter ego on stage, maybe."

The best thing about "Idol," she said, is how it helps form a singer as an artist. Those in the show's music department, including music director Rickey Minor, have worked with Aretha Franklin and other music greats, Grace said.

"You'd be silly not to listen to them and take advice from them," she said.

Grace's young daughter is getting a kick out of watching her on TV and might be close to figuring out why mom is there, she said. Sarver's 3-year-old already has.

"She says she wants to go on 'American Idol.' So maybe we've got another one in the future," he said.

Next week, 12 more semifinalists will vie for three spots in the competition's top 12, but the dismissed semifinalists may have another chance. After the first nine finalists are selected by viewer votes, the judges will pick the last three finalists following a wild card round March 5.

'Wrestler' 'roid-dealer actor in steroids bust

NEW YORK (AP)—The actor who played a steroid dealer in the Oscar-nominated film "The Wrestler" was charged Thursday with being the real thing: Authorities arrested him in a large steroid bust that culminated in a violent chase.

Federal prosecutors in Manhattan also accused Scott Siegel of leading Drug Enforcement Administration agents and local police on a car chase worthy of an action flick.

Siegel, 34, was ordered held without bail on federal drug dealing and assault charges at a court appearance Thursday in White Plains, N.Y. The arrest and chase played out three days before the Oscars, where "The Wrestler" could garner an Academy Award for the lead actor, Mickey Rourke.

Prosecutors said investigators had seized 1,500 bottles labeled as anabolic steroids and tens of thousands of dollars in cash during searches of Siegal's home and that of his parents.

"We're going to evaluate the charges," his attorney, Peter Tilem, said.

Authorities had Siegel under surveillance as part of a steroid-trafficking investigation. On Wednesday night, officers staking out his parent's town house in a gated development in Westchester County spotted him getting out of his car carrying a brown box, court papers said.

Siegel spotted the officers unmarked vehicle, walked over and commented on their car before driving away, the papers said. When he returned a short time later, several police vehicles converged on his car.

In the ensuing pursuit, he smashed through a fence and rammed three police cars and two DEA cars, "apparently intentionally," the court papers said.

When cornered, Siegel again smashed into police cars and aimed his car at one of the officers who was on foot "in an apparent attempt to run him over," the paper said. He eventually tried to flee on foot before officers finally grabbed him, the papers added.

"The Wrestler" features Rourke as a washed-up wrestler trying to make a comeback. Siegel has a bit part as a steroid dealer in a gym where Rourke's character works out.

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The Uninvited

Friday		4:05	7:25	9:35
Saturday	1:20	4:05	7:25	9:35
Sunday	1:20	4:05	7:25	
Mon and Tues		4:05	7:25	

Elizabeth Banks, David Strathairn
Horror, Remake • Rated PG 13

Synopsis
A deadly battle of wills begins when Anna returns from a psychiatric facility and investigates the circumstances surrounding her mother's suspicious and untimely death. While Anna recuperates from the tragedy, her father becomes engaged to Rachel, her mother's former nurse, and moves her into their home. Anna's dismay quickly turns to horror when she is visited by her mother's ghost—crying out for revenge and pointing an accusing finger at Rachel.

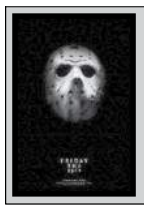
Defiance

Friday		4:00	7:00	9:45
Saturday	1:00	4:00	7:00	9:45
Sunday	1:00	4:00	7:00	
Mon and Tues		4:00	7:00	

Daniel Craig, Liev Schreiber
Action, Drama, War • Rated R

Synopsis
The year is 1941 and the Jews of Eastern Europe are being massacred by the thousands. Managing to escape certain death, three brothers take refuge in the dense surrounding woods they have known since childhood. There they begin their desperate battle against the Nazis. At first it is all they can do to stay alive. But gradually, as whispers of their daring spreads, they begin to attract others—men and women, young and old—willing to risk everything for the sake of even a moment's freedom.

★ ★ ★



Friday The 13th

Friday		4:20	7:05	10:00
Saturday	1:05	4:20	7:05	10:00
Sunday	1:05	4:20	7:05	
Mon and Tues		4:20	7:05	

Jared Padalecki, Amanda Righetti
Horror, Remake • Rated R

Synopsis
Clay searches for his missing sister in the eerie woods of legendary Crystal Lake, where he stumbles on the creaky remains of rotting old cabins behind moss-covered trees. And that's not the only thing lying in wait under the brush. Against the advice of police and cautions from the locals, Clay pursues what few leads he has, with the help of a young woman he meets among a group of college kids up for an all-thrills weekend.

Pink Panther 2

Friday		4:10	7:10	9:30
Saturday	1:15	4:10	7:10	9:30
Sunday	1:15	4:10	7:10	
Mon and Tues		4:10	7:10	

Steve Martin, Andy Garcia
Comedy, Mystery • Rated PG

Push

Friday		4:15	7:30	9:40
Saturday	1:10	4:15	7:30	9:40
Sunday	1:10	4:15	7:30	
Mon and Tues		4:15	7:30	

Chris Evans, Dakota Fanning
Thriller Supernatural • Rated PG 13

Ang Tanging Ina N'yong Lahat

Friday		4:25	7:20	9:50
Saturday	1:30	4:25	7:20	9:50
Sunday	1:30	4:25	7:20	
Mon and Tues		4:25	7:20	

Ai-Ai de las Alas, Eugene Domingo
Comedy • Rated PG

Taken

Friday		4:30	7:15	9:55
Saturday	1:25	4:30	7:15	9:55
Sunday	1:25	4:30	7:15	
Mon and Tues		4:30	7:15	

Liam Neeson, Maggie Grace
Action, Drama, Thriller • Rated PG 13

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Some Oscar presenters back out

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Anonymity has its perks—especially for celebrity Oscar presenters who might need to wriggle out of the gig.

At least some of the presenters who'd been in line for Sunday's Academy Awards show have backed out, said Bruce Vilanch, who is at work writing the revamped telecast.

"This year, since no one's names have been announced, they're all free to back out and nobody will know. And some of them have taken that option," he said Thursday. He didn't name names.

Laurence Mark and Bill Condon, who are producing the show for the first time, have promised sweeping changes but have been careful to keep many details under wraps—in particular the identity of presenters, many of whom won't be seen on the red carpet.

Joan Rivers, veteran host of pre-show arrivals telecasts of yore, said that's a wise idea.

"You want to see who are they wearing and what are they wearing," Rivers said. "And, if you're doing that on the red carpet, you don't necessarily have to tune into the show."

Rivers believes the red-carpet coverage has helped erode ratings for the Academy Awards.

"Of course, we took away," she said. "There's no question that these took away. I'm just surprised it took them that long to figure it out."

In past years, celebrity presenters have been a large part of the awards show's pre-publicity campaign—and that gives them incentive to stick to the job no matter what.

"Because when it's announced to the world that they're going to be there, they're not going to back out," Vilanch said.

"But now that nobody knows I'm doing it, and I already got the dress, I'll back out," he joked. "I'll back out, keep the dress and wear it someplace else."

■ ■ ■ ■

PARTIES, SWAG AND STAR ARRIVALS: With the Oscars just days away, Hollywood is packed with parties, gift suites and a stream of movie stars bound for the Kodak Theatre.

■ ■ ■ ■

WINNING EXHIBIT: Movie fans can get a taste of awards-season movie magic at the Hollywood Museum's just-opened "And the Winner Is..." exhibit. Check out Meryl Streep's nun's habit from "Doubt," Kate Winslet's gray dress from "The Reader" and Mickey Rourke's fighting outfit from "The Wrestler."

Memorabilia from past Oscar contenders and winners is also displayed, including Hannibal Lector's mask from "Silence of the Lambs" and Sylvester Stallone's boxing gloves from "Rocky."

"And the Winner Is..." will be on view until March 29.

■ ■ ■ ■

CALLING THEM OFF THE CARPET: At least one person believes the secrecy surrounding this year's Oscar presenters—including keeping them off the red carpet—is a wise idea.

"You want to see who are they wearing and what are they wearing," said veteran red carpet maven Joan Rivers. "And, if you're doing that on the red carpet, you don't necessarily have to tune into the show."

Rivers says pre-show arrivals telecasts—like the ones she used to host—helped erode ratings for the Academy Awards. "Of course, we took away," she said. "There's no question that these took away. I'm just surprised it took them that long to figure it out."

Rookie Oscar producers Laurence Mark and Bill Condon have promised sweeping changes to the Academy Awards, and have been careful to keep many details under wraps.

AP

In this Sept. 25, 2008 file photo, actress Kathleen Turner attends the opening night of "Equus" on Broadway in New York.

Injured Kathleen Turner returns to comedy Saturday

NEW YORK (AP)—The show will go on again Saturday—with Kathleen Turner wearing a leg brace and using a cane in the off-Broadway comedy "The Third Story."

The play's spokesman, Rick Miramontez, said Turner injured her knee Tuesday at the Lucille Lortel Theatre where "The Third Story," written by Charles Busch, is playing. Since the production does not have understudies, three performances of the MCC Theater production were canceled.

Said MCC co-artistic director Bernard Telsey: "Kathleen Turner personifies the attitude of the Broadway trouper. Against any odds, she must—and will—make her performance."

Il Divo member splits from wife

NEW YORK (AP)—The fairytale romance of Il Divo's Carlos Marin is over.

The 40-year-old has divorced his wife, Geraldine Larrosa. The pair had been wed for three years but were together for more than 13 years.

They got hitched in a surprise ceremony at Disneyland in 2006. The Cinderella-themed wedding featured a horse-drawn carriage as well as Mickey Mouse and Minnie on hand.

Il Divo's representative, Lois Najarian, says the split is amicable and that the pair remain good friends—so close that Marin is going to continue to produce for Larrosa, who is a singer.

Il Divo is a platinum-selling classical crossover quartet. They kick off their U.S. tour in Washington on May 8.

In this Jan. 20, 2009 file photo, Carlos Marin from the singing group Il Divo arrives at the Inaugural Purple Ball in Washington.

AP

Danielle Steel is going digital

AP

In this June 17, 2008 file photo, author Danielle Steel poses for a photo after her appearance on the NBC "Today" television show in New York.

NEW YORK (AP)—Another brand-name writer has joined the e-book party: Danielle Steel.

The prolific, best-selling novelist said Thursday that 71 of her books—and that's not even all of them—will be made available digitally Feb. 24, including her latest, "One Day at a Time." Other works include "Sunset in St. Tropez," "The Promise" and "Leap of Faith."

In recent weeks, John Grisham and Tom Clancy also have agreed to allow their novels to come out as e-books, a tiny, but quickly growing market.

TMZ posts photo it claims is a beaten Rihanna

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A celebrity Web site has posted a photo it claims shows singer Rihanna's face with bruises, scratches and swelling from an attack alleged to be at the hands of her boyfriend, singer Chris Brown.

The image, posted Thursday by TMZ, shows welts on the woman's forehead above each of her eyebrows, marks on her cheek and around her lips and general swelling. TMZ did not say how it obtained the photo, when it was taken or by whom.

Asked whether it could confirm the photo's origin, Los Angeles Police Department Officer Jason Lee said only that the agency hasn't released any images of the woman who accused Brown, and will not release evidence photos.

Single woman can't accept guardianship for three kids

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: Six years ago, my best friend asked me to be godmother to her beautiful little daughter, "Sharona." At the time she made it clear that if I accepted, she and her husband would name me as Sharona's guardian in their will. I was deeply touched that they would trust me with such an important responsibility and was happy to accept.

As she has grown, Sharona and I have developed a close bond, and I love her as if she were my own. Her parents have since had two sons, and although I am not the boys' godmother, they have now asked me if they can name me as guardian for all three.

I love the children, but I am 27, single and live 1,500 miles from my family. I cannot financially, physically or emotionally take on the task of raising three children. If anything were to happen to my friends, I couldn't bear the thought of anyone other than me raising Sharona. Would it be terrible if I turned down the request to also be guardian to the boys?

GODMOTHER TO ONE IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR GODMOTHER TO ONE: No, it would not, because your reasons are valid. However, your friend and her husband may want to ensure that their children would all be raised together if anything were to happen to them—which it probably won't. So be prepared in case they decide they want to make other arrangements for Sharona.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Could you please remind your readers that Hawaii is part of the United States? You would be shocked at how many times tourists have asked me, "Have you ever been to America?" And when I visit the mainland, people ask me if we have cars in Hawaii, if we live in grass shacks and can I dance the hula.

A great way to get the word out that Hawaii is a wonderful, up-to-date place that happens to be the 50th state in the union would be a "reminder" from you. I am proud to be an American, and I find these questions to be insulting.

CHERI-ANN IN HONOLULU

DEAR CHERI-ANN: Please don't take offense. The questioners are not trying to be insulting. Obviously, these people were absent (or distracted) on the day that their class in modern history covered the fact that Hawaii went from being a U.S. territory to a state on Aug. 21, 1959. When you are asked these kinds of questions, tell the person to go to Google.com and search on the word Hawaii.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have a housekeeper who comes once a week for five hours. My family is calling me an ogre because I expect them to pick up their stuff before she arrives.

Abby, I want that woman's full five hours spent cleaning—not picking up after everyone so she can get started. Whatever she doesn't get done will most likely have to be finished by me. I work full time, plus I am the one who runs errands and helps with homework. I don't need another chore added to my list.

Am I being unfair?

FULL PLATE IN ELIZABETH CITY, N.C.

DEAR FULL PLATE: Not from my perspective. Insisting that your family learn to pick up after themselves and care for their clothing is doing them a favor. In years to come, when they are out on their own, those lessons will have become second nature and maybe they won't need a housekeeper.

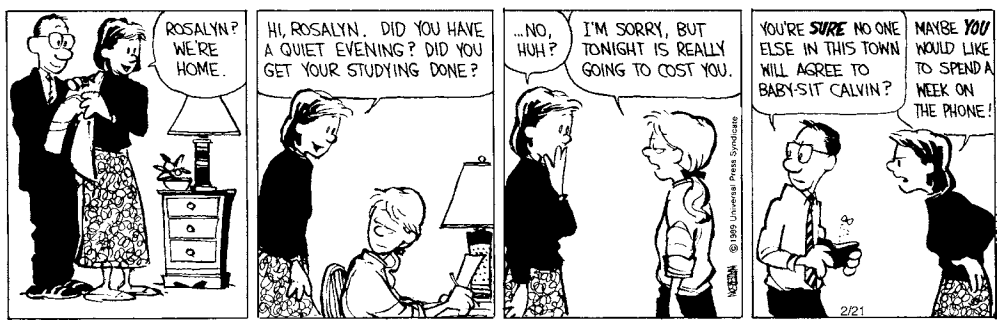
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." To order, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


ROSALYN? WE'RE HOME.
HI, ROSALYN. DID YOU HAVE A QUIET EVENING? DID YOU GET YOUR STUDYING DONE?
...NO, HUH?
I'M SORRY, BUT TONIGHT IS REALLY GOING TO COST YOU.
YOU'RE SURE NO ONE ELSE IN THIS TOWN WILL AGREE TO BABY-SIT CALVIN?
MAYBE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SPEND A WEEK ON THE PHONE!
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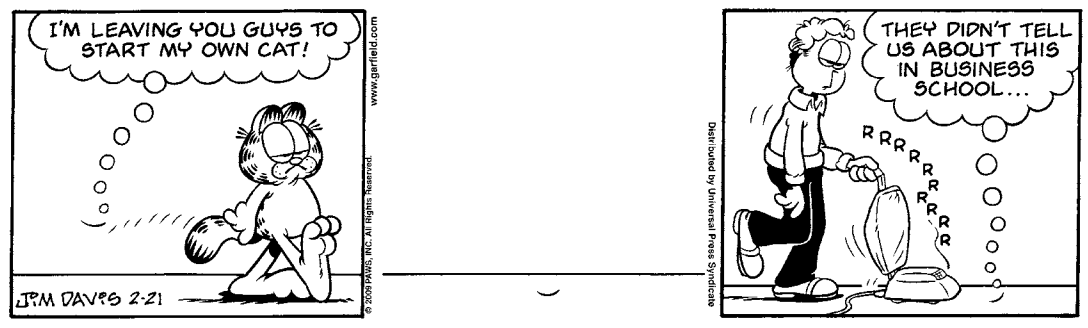
2/21

Garfield®

By Jim Davis


I'M LEAVING YOU GUYS TO START MY OWN CAT!
JIM DAVIS 2-21
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RRRRRRRRR
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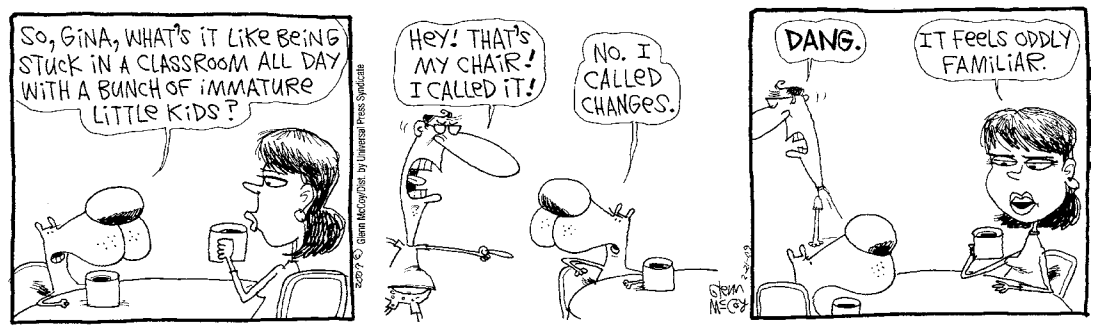
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


So, GINA, WHAT'S IT LIKE BEING STUCK IN A CLASSROOM ALL DAY WITH A BUNCH OF IMMATURE LITTLE KIDS?
Hey! THAT'S MY CHAIR! I CALLED IT!
No. I CALLED CHANGES.
DANG.
IT FEELS ODDLY FAMILIAR.
©2007 Glenn McCoy/Dist. by Universal Press Syndicate

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Repeatedly, in verse
4 Sea eagle
8 See 8-Down
12 Winter woe
13 Lunch hour
14 Vagrant
15 Polygraph detection
16 Burden
17 Santa's runway
18 Brunch entree
21 "Fall back" hrs. in NYC
22 Infinitesimal
23 200 milligrams
26 X rating?
27 "Humbug!"
30 On
31 Wilkinson of football lore
32 Foolproof
33 Favorite
34 Lisa Simpson plays it
35 Beeper
36 DIY buy
37 Scratch the surface
38 Ice cream flavor
45 Run easily
46 Do what you're told
47 Have 12-Across
48 First victim
49 Pond organism
50 Folk-song mule
51 Caged house pet, for short
52 New Mexico art colony
53 Take a stab at

DOWN

1 Dispatches, "Sopranos" style
2 Impertinent
3 Brass-section member
4 Sign up
5 Perch
6 Ham's old man
7 Provided an income for
8 With 8-Across, six
9 Sweater stuff
10 Reed instrument
11 Cushy
19 Tide type
20 Chaps
23 Upper limit
24 Wore away
25 Deteriorate
26 Monkey suit
27 Pester
28 "— You Lonesome Tonight?"
29 That girl
31 Anti-slippage surface
32 Bollywood cover-up
34 Bracketed word
35 Bamboo lovers
36 Genuflected
37 Chutney ingredient
38 Criticism
39 Kimono, e.g.
40 Blunted blade
41 TV handyman Bob
42 Make it all the way
43 Half a Jim Carrey film title
44 Partner in crime

Solution time: 27 mins.

O	R	B	■	R	P	M	■	P	A	P	E	R
B	A	A	■	A	L	I	■	A	R	R	A	Y
E	B	B	■	M	A	N	T	I	C	O	R	E
A	B	E	■	S	N	E	E	R	■	■	■	■
H	I	S	S	■	E	R	A	■	K	I	D	S
■	■	■	O	F	T	■	M	A	N	D	E	L
A	M	I	N	O	■	■	R	O	O	M	Y	■
M	A	N	N	E	R	■	S	E	C	■	■	■
P	O	N	Y	■	I	I	I	■	K	I	N	D
■	■	■	■	M	O	O	L	A	■	M	O	O
M	A	N	H	A	T	T	A	N	■	B	O	W
A	L	I	A	S	■	A	G	E	■	U	S	E
P	E	L	T	S	■	S	E	W	■	E	E	L

Yesterday's answer 2-21

1	2	3	■	4	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12			■	13				■	14			
15			■	16				■	17			
18			19					20				
■	■	■	21			■	22			■	■	■
23	24	25			■	26			■	27	28	29
30				■	31			■	32			
33			■	34			■	35				
■	■	■	36			■	37			■	■	■
38	39	40				41				42	43	44
45				■	46				■	47		
48					49					50		
51				■	52				■	53		

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CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Charlotte Church, 23; Jennifer Love Hewitt, 30; Kelsey Grammer, 54; Tyne Daly, 63

Happy Birthday: You have to be your own person and follow your own dreams. Use your charm to get your way and you will be able to return the favors given when you have reached a position that allows you to do so. This year the focus is on what you need to do to achieve greater status. Your numbers are 7, 10, 13, 23, 26, 30, 35

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Give people enough space and you will be allowed the same privilege. Don't let anyone push you into something that doesn't feel right. Reconnect with someone you miss or who you know can contribute to your life. ✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Avoid jumping into something without giving enough thought to the consequences. Bring past mistakes to mind and you will avoid a repeat performance. Don't be enticed by someone from your past. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): A social event, trip or business gathering will bring you in touch with someone who can help you with a professional idea or plan you have. Your networking skills will pay off and progress can be made quickly. Make your move. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Timing is everything but, if you lag behind now, someone you've been trying to impress is likely to criticize you. Check your motives and act accordingly. Don't make your move for love—make it for what you will achieve. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): You are not the only one with good ideas and taking part in something you believe in could easily lead to an interesting partnership. Work with, not against, others to gain the most and to build the strongest base possible for success. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Brace yourself for an unexpected change within one of your relationships. Do not let anyone or anything influence a decision that is pending. If you are uncertain, wait until you figure out what works for you personally. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Love is in the stars and can change your world. Talk about your needs and what you would like to see develop personally and emotionally. Before you know it, your plans will be in full gear and the outcome will be a howling success. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Question your motives: Make sure you are being honest with yourself. Don't let revenge be your purpose. You aren't always right, so listen to reason before you make a decision that will be difficult to reverse. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Someone who has backed you needs reassurance. The more you give back, the more you will receive in the future. Actions always reinforce your position, so do something nice and see what happens. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Your usual, steady nature will be disrupted with an emotional encounter. Troubles with friends, relatives or a neighbor will surface and must be taken care of before they go through the roof. A little compromising will help. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Don't be surprised if you run into someone from your past or if you can't stop thinking of someone you once knew. Don't hesitate to find out how an old friend is doing but play it safe by listening rather than sharing your own personal thoughts. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Expect someone to help you out but don't be surprised if he or she wants something in return. Grateful action on your part will be in your best interest. A partnership that was questionable in the past can be reestablished. Your timing is much better now. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are always trying new things. You are inquisitive, have no fear and are willing to push to reach your goals.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

2				3				
	4		6		8			
		7				1		
	5		4				7	
7				8				6
	9				5		3	
		6				5		
			1		9		4	
				7				3

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 2/21

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

4	1	8	7	2	5	6	3	9
5	9	3	6	4	8	1	2	7
7	2	6	9	3	1	5	4	8
8	3	7	2	6	9	4	5	1
9	4	1	3	5	7	8	6	2
2	6	5	1	8	4	7	9	3
3	8	2	4	1	6	9	7	5
1	7	4	5	9	3	2	8	6
6	5	9	8	7	2	3	1	4

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 2/20

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

WHISTLER/BLACKCOMB MOUNTAIN **Solution: 6 letters**

K	R	A	P	P	S	C	H	O	O	L	I	A	R	T
E	I	D	L	A	B	I	R	A	G	T	S	A	O	C
R	Q	B	A	S	E	R	S	O	(E)	(G)	(D)	(E)	U	S
T	A	U	R	S	U	G	N	I	I	K	S	K	N	E
P	S	F	I	O	T	D	O	E	B	N	S	I	D	M
I	A	H	T	P	O	N	W	S	I	O	A	B	H	A
Z	O	R	O	L	M	E	A	A	U	T	W	R	O	G
E	S	C	A	P	E	E	R	R	N	M	T	L	U	L
E	G	E	C	L	P	T	N	U	U	V	M	D	S	A
T	O	D	E	I	Y	I	O	T	T	A	I	E	E	C
A	L	I	O	K	P	M	N	W	I	N	T	E	R	I
V	F	R	C	L	E	M	P	G	E	A	E	S	W	E
I	H	O	T	E	L	K	Y	I	D	R	I	V	E	R
R	R	E	N	T	A	L	A	L	C	S	L	E	D	R
P	M	A	C	R	E	E	K	L	O	S	I	T	E	A

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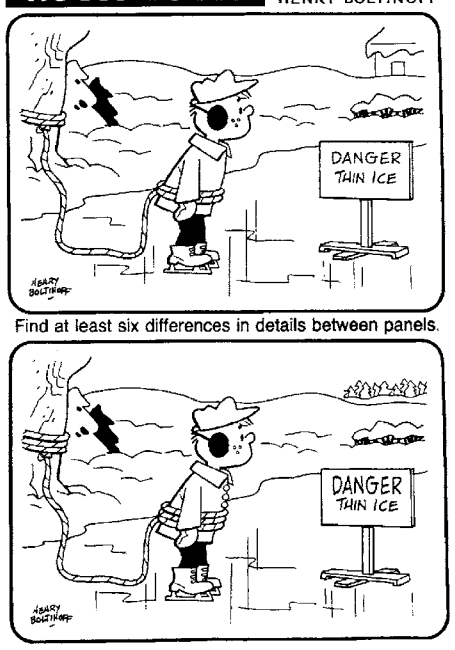
Adventure, Base, Bike, Bowls, Camp, Coast, Creek, Date, Dine, Drive, Edge, Equipment, Escape, Games, Garibaldi, Glacier, Golf, Gondola, Hotel, Lake, Lodge, Mountains, Olympic, Paralympics, Park, Pass, Private, Raft, Rental, Restaurant, Ride, Rocky, Roundhouse, School, Seek, Shopping, Site, Skiing, Sled, Snow, Summer, Tour, Trail, Train, View, Winter, Ziptrek

Yesterday's Answer: Walkways

We listened to your requests! **TREASURY #6** is the first-ever Wonderword book containing only 20 x 20 puzzles, with 75 of these large puzzles. To order, send check or money order for $10.95 each plus $3.25 p&h ($14.20 total each, U.S. funds only) for the first volume, $1.50 p&h for each additional volume, to Wonderword, Universal Press Syndicate, 1130 Walnut St., Kansas City, Mo. 64106 or call toll-free 1-800-642-6480. Order online at upuzzles.com.

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

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Differences: 1. Rope has three loops. 2. Jacket has buttons. 3. House is missing. 4. Trees have been added. 5. Boots are taller. 6. Word "danger" is larger.

Wishing Well®

5	6	7	2	7	3	4	3	5	4	3	6	2
D	N	A	G	L	F	R	A	U	E	M	O	L
4	8	6	7	8	5	7	8	3	6	3	6	5
C	B	M	O	E	T	V	A	E	E	I	N	I
3	6	8	3	2	5	4	2	3	6	4	8	7
S	T	L	Y	A	E	I	D	O	A	P	E	E
5	4	5	8	7	4	2	5	6	4	8	4	7
S	R	I	A	D	O	F	N	L	C	D	A	O
6	7	6	7	8	2	5	6	4	8	4	5	2
B	N	L	E	E	O	C	O	T	R	E	R	R
4	3	7	2	4	6	5	6	2	7	2	6	5
D	U	C	O	L	C	E	K	T	A	H	S	A
7	2	4	3	4	7	4	2	3	5	7	5	2
L	E	O	R	V	L	E	R	S	S	S	E	S

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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Super Crossword

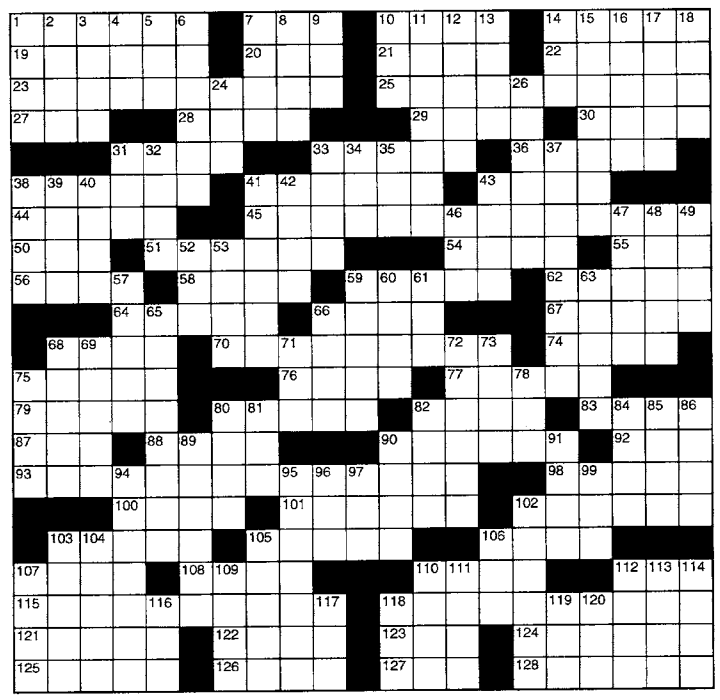
DESTINY'S CHILD

ACROSS

1 Scamp
7 Weimaraner's warning
10 Corrida victim
14 Cheerleader's maneuver
19 '59 Marty Robbins hit
20 Caviar
21 The Four —
22 Stadium
23 Speaker of a remark at 45 Across
25 Dashboard feature
27 Corpulent
28 Docile
29 Laugh loudly
30 "Comin' — the Rye"
31 Impressed immensely
33 "The Stepford Wives" author
36 "Carmen" composer
38 Jose of "Moulin Rouge"
41 Rock's Iron —
43 Jeroboam contents
44 Gentle as —
45 Start of remark
50 Firepiace fuel
51 "Rodeo," for one
54 — brakes
55 "— volente"
56 Willingly, once
58 Journalist Jacob
59 Plot
62 Link
64 Delibes opera
66 "Spartacus" setting
67 Persian, presently
68 Make a necklace
70 Part 2 of remark
74 Glen
75 Cookbook author Smith
76 Yemeni seaport
77 February forecast
79 Dismay
80 Composer Copland
82 Paint layer
83 Recedes
87 Sodom escapee
88 Cantata composer
90 Shook up
92 Palindromic preposition
93 Part 3 of remark
98 Sgt. Bilko
100 "An apple — . . ."
101 Fancy
102 Jacket style
103 Lid
105 Masters' "— River Anthology"
106 Palliative
107 "Rule Britannia" composer
108 QE II section
110 Epps or Vizquel
112 Officeholders
115 "Samson and Delilah" composer
118 End of remark
121 Right a wrong
122 Social climber
123 Crowd
124 January stoat
125 Correctional
126 Sundance's sweetie
127 Use a crowbar
128 Kant subject

DOWN

1 Scuba site
2 — mater
3 Primer pooch
4 Mushroom part
5 Hibachi residue
6 Hang around
7 Harsh
8 Something to skip?
9 Musical syllables
10 Make lace
11 Wind instrument
12 Scout's job
13 Dept. of Labor div.
14 Houston or Huff
15 Twisted treat
16 Mythical river
17 Like some gases
18 Tropical tuber
24 Youngster
26 Runs circles around?
31 Prepare for combat
32 "Dragnet" star
33 Navel store?
34 Maestro de Waart
35 Filly physician
37 Sedentary
38 Hairpiece
39 "The Time Machine" people
40 Frenzy
41 Sphere
42 Singer/actor Ed
43 Keen
46 Regulatory agcy.
47 Unimprovable
48 Notre Dame's river
49 Basil or Braxton
52 Joan Van —
53 Branch
57 Panache
59 Bewitching bunch
60 Mass communication?
61 Golfer Hogan
63 Beside oneself
65 George Eliot novel
66 Change the decor
68 Subordinate to
69 Gladden
71 Paving material
72 Wagner heroine
73 Insipid
75 Spanish surrealist
78 Nice time of year
80 Sore
81 "So that's your game!"
82 Stallion's son
84 German auto engineer
85 Cheeseboard choice
86 Cassandra or Merlin
89 Tony, Oscar, and Edgar
90 Don —
91 Farmer's place
94 Italian city
95 Quail feature
96 — -Magnon
97 Lennon's lady
99 Computer acronym
102 He runs a clip joint
103 Pack peppers
104 Soubise ingredient
105 Perfume
106 Lea lament
107 PDQ, politely
109 Vacation sensation
110 Aroma
111 Melville title start
112 Medical suffix
113 Tempo or Rota
114 WWII gun
116 — Aviv
117 Federal agcy.
118 Mischiefmaker
119 Bonanza material
120 Actress Thurman



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Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

1. GEOGRAPHY: Where is the Bay of Fundy?
2. SCIENCE: How much faster does sound travel in water than in air?
3. MATH: What is the origin of the word "zero"?
4. ENTERTAINERS: Which famous comedian once trained as a boxer?
5. ANATOMY: What part of the human anatomy contains a region called the macula?
6. LANGUAGE: What is a "beau geste"?
7. MEASUREMENTS: What does a gill measure?
8. INVENTIONS: What was the yo-yo's use for hundreds of years before it became a toy?
9. AD SLOGANS: Which company urged customers to "run for the border"?
10. TELEVISION: Which television sitcom was set in the Stratford Inn?

Answers

1. Between the Canadian provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia
2. Four times faster
3. Arabic, from the word "sifr," which means empty
4. Bob Hope
5. The eye
6. A magnanimous gesture
7. Liquid, usually one-half cup or one-quarter of a pint
8. A weapon. Pedro Flores, a Philippine immigrant, invented the yo-yo toy in the 1920s.
9. Taco Bell
10. "Newhart"

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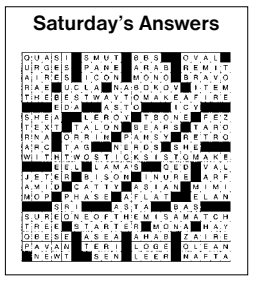
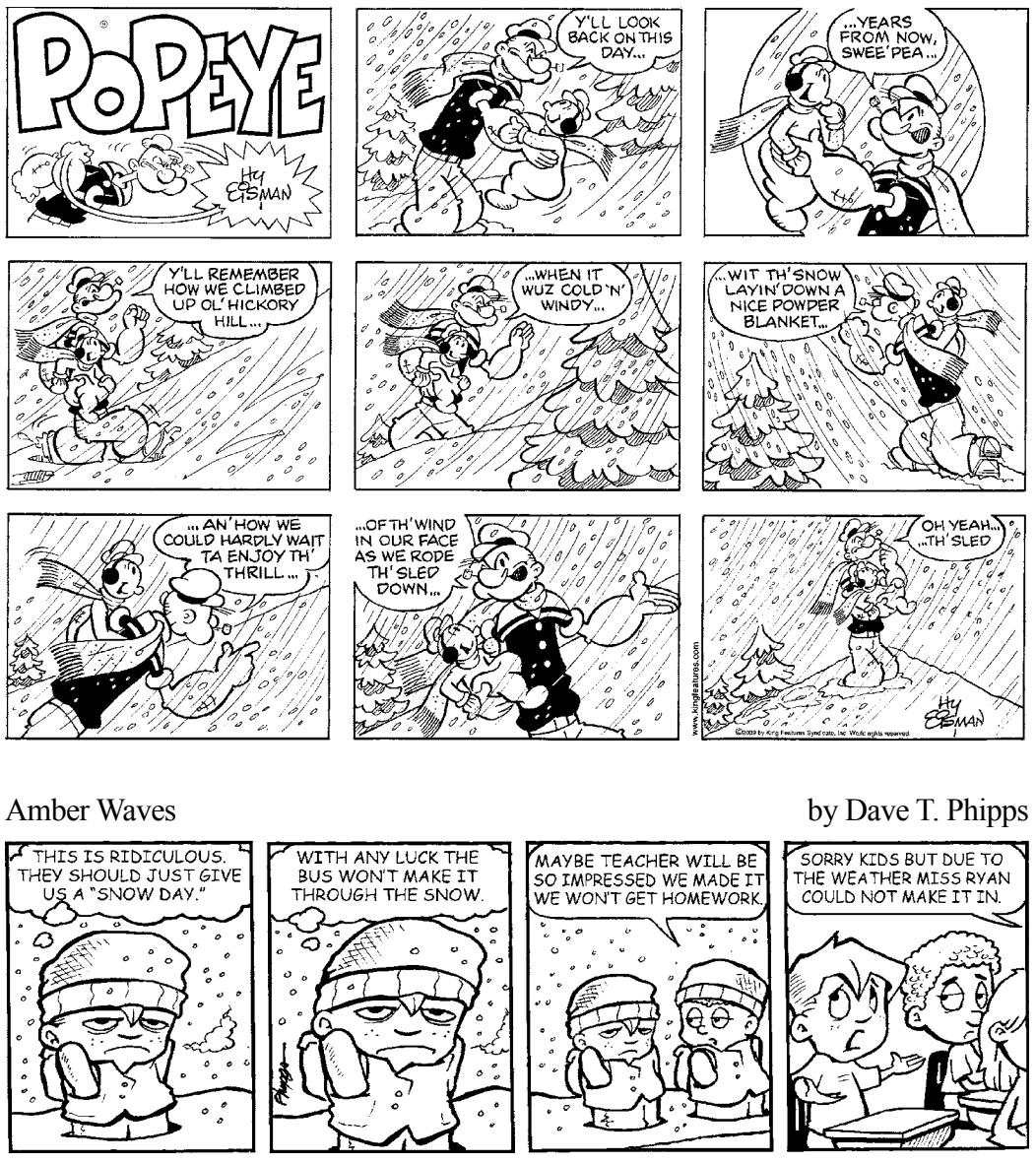
Saturday's Answers

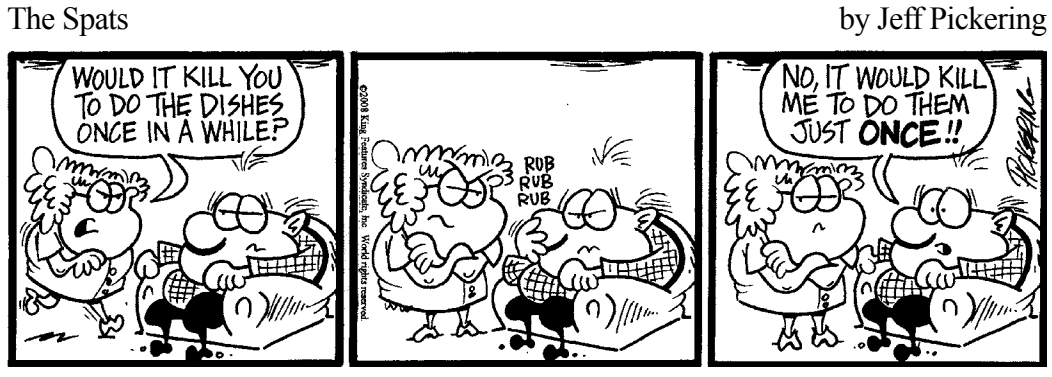



POPEYE
HY EISMAN
Y'LL LOOK BACK ON THIS DAY...
...YEARS FROM NOW, SWEE'PEA...
Y'LL REMEMBER HOW WE CLIMBED UP OL' HICKORY HILL...
...WHEN IT WUZ COLD 'N' WINDY...
...WIT TH' SNOW LAYIN' DOWN A NICE POWDER BLANKET...
... AN' HOW WE COULD HARDLY WAIT TA ENJOY TH' THRILL...
...OF TH' WIND IN OUR FACE AS WE RODE TH' SLED DOWN...
OH YEAH... ...TH' SLED
HY EISMAN

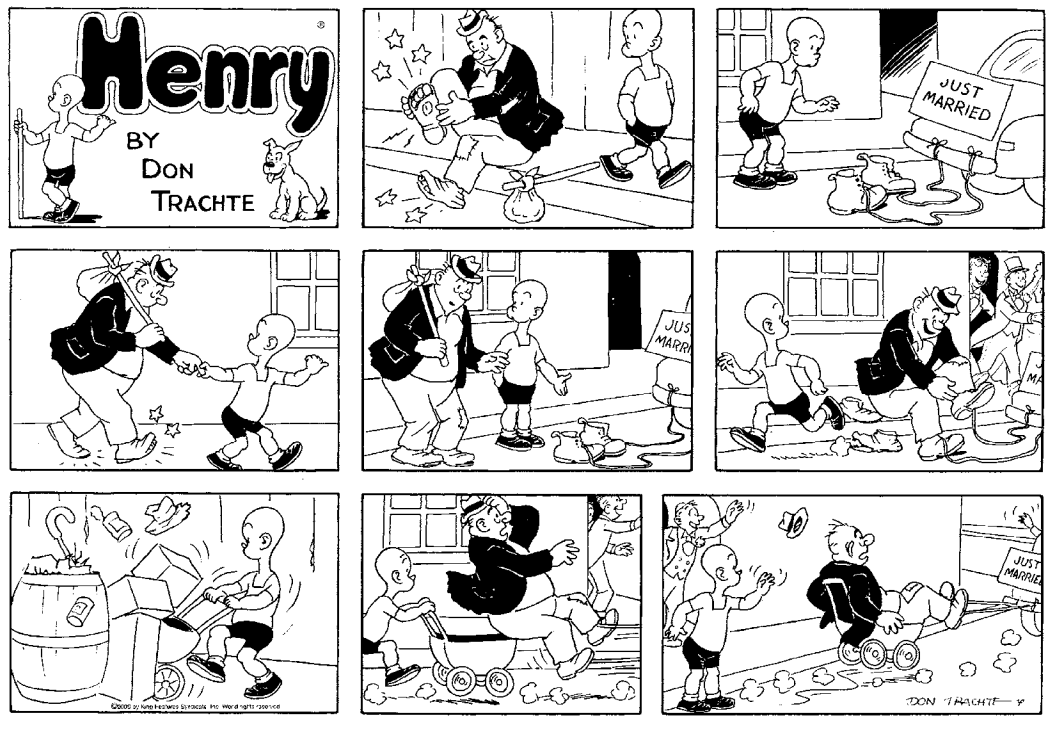
Amber Waves by Dave T. Phipps

THIS IS RIDICULOUS. THEY SHOULD JUST GIVE US A "SNOW DAY."
WITH ANY LUCK THE BUS WON'T MAKE IT THROUGH THE SNOW.
MAYBE TEACHER WILL BE SO IMPRESSED WE MADE IT WE WON'T GET HOMEWORK.
SORRY KIDS BUT DUE TO THE WEATHER MISS RYAN COULD NOT MAKE IT IN.

The Spats by Jeff Pickering



MARK TRAIL
WOOD DUCKS ARE AMONG OUR MOST COLORFUL BIRDS, AND THEY LIKE TO MAKE THEIR NESTS IN TREES
THEY SEEK TREE CAVITIES OR ABANDONED WOODPECKER HOLES
WHEN IT'S TIME FOR HER YOUNG TO LEAVE THE NEST, A MOTHER WOOD DUCK CALLS EXCITEDLY TO HER BROOD...
AND FROM WITHIN THE NEST CAVITY A DOWNY HEAD APPEARS.
AFTER BEING COAXED BY ITS MOTHER, THE TINY DUCK GETS UP ENOUGH NERVE TO LAUNCH ITSELF OUT OF THE NEST
SOON IT IS FOLLOWED BY ITS BROTHERS AND SISTERS... THEIR LIGHT WEIGHT AND FLUFFY BODIES HELP THEM TO LAND SAFELY
AFTER LANDING THEY ARE ALL MARCHED TO THE NEAREST POND TO BEGIN FLIGHT TRAINING
JACK ELROD



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CLASSIFIED ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

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• 3-Liner with picture	**$45**
• 5-Liner with picture	**$55**

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Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

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- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

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Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

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Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

SMTWTFS NEED

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Weak-kneed

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MAKE-A-WISH
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Saipan Tribune

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Guard files sex harassment suit vs principal
2 hurt in Puerto Rico vehicular crash. PAG
There is still hope for nonimm
joins Micronesia
OPINION METER
This week's poll:
With what you know of the CUC situation, do you support the adoption of new regulation
235- NEWS

Shaq, other big names stay put on deadline day

By BRIAN MAHONEY
AP BASKETBALL WRITER

Shaquille O'Neal and all the other big names stayed put on trade deadline day, with owners perhaps scared of making moves that added salary in an uncertain economic climate.

The Cleveland Cavaliers were among the suitors that reportedly reached out to Phoenix to inquire about O'Neal, but they couldn't close a deal for him or any other big man they sought to battle defending NBA champion Boston.

Amare Stoudemire and Vince Carter headlined the stars who had space on the rumor mill in recent weeks but went nowhere, with teams having to balance a player's impact on the court with his effect on the wallet.

"If anybody hasn't figured out that the economy is hitting every company in the country and in the world, they're not very bright," Dallas owner Mark Cuban said Wednesday. "Of course it's hitting everybody and everybody has to be considerate of it."

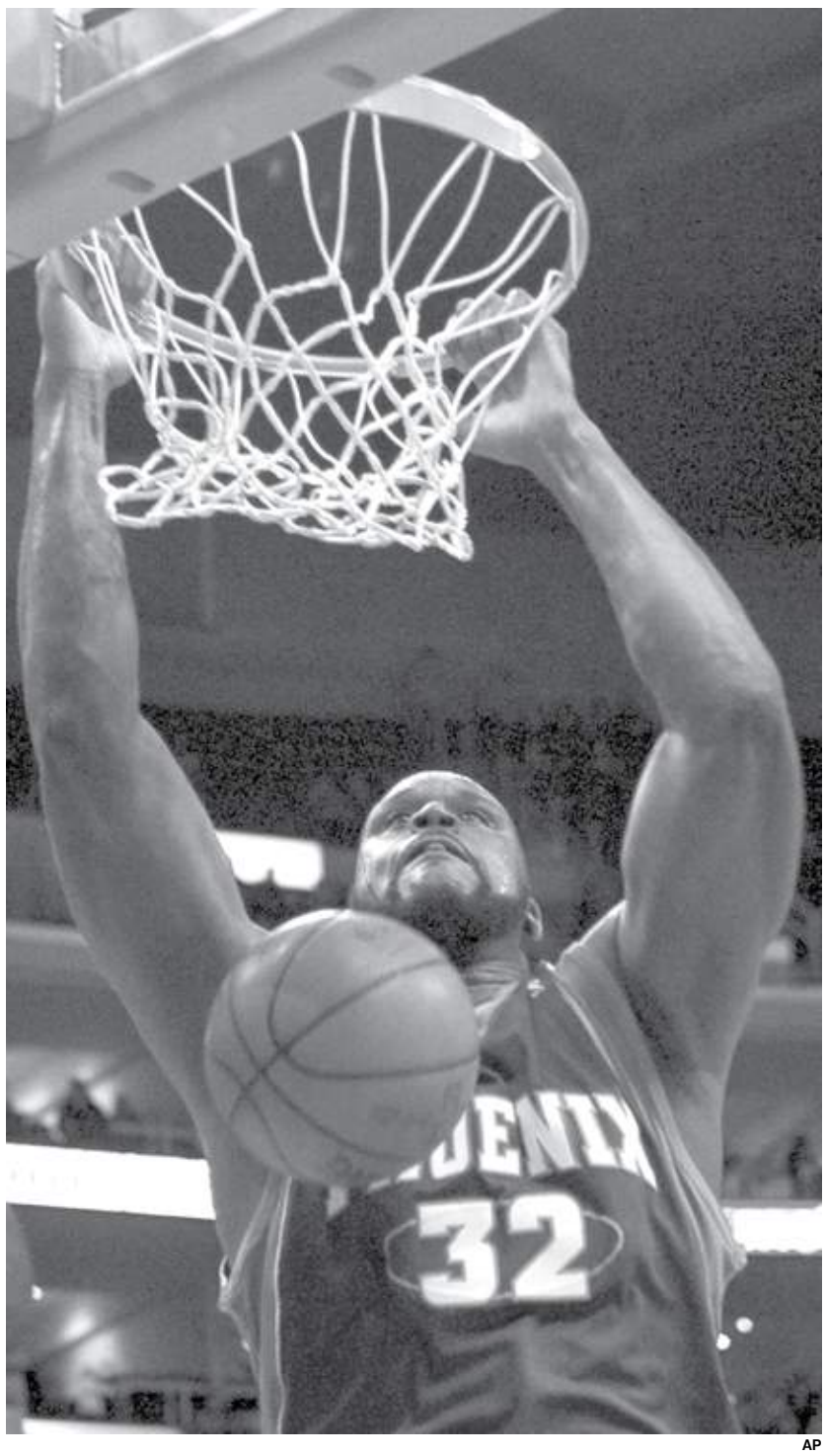
The Suns were believed to be one of the teams considering financial-based moves during a disappointing season. But after Phoenix fired Terry Porter on Monday and scored 140 points in consecutive wins under new coach Alvin Gentry, owner Robert Sarver gave the go-ahead to keep the team together.

"We could have made moves to save money and, given the economy and our payroll, that would have been understandable," general manager Steve Kerr said, "but he stepped up and allowed us to move forward with what we have."

The only top contender to make an upgrade was Orlando, which landed Rafer Alston from Houston in a three-team deal that also included Memphis. The Magic needed a point guard to replace All-Star Jameer Nelson, who they announced had season-ending shoulder injury Thursday.

Also:

■ The Chicago Bulls traded unhappy guard Larry Hughes to the New York Knicks for Tim Thomas, Jerome James and Anthony Roberson. Chicago also traded guard Thabo Sefolosha to the Oklahoma City Thunder for a 2009 first-round draft pick.



AP

Phoenix Suns Shaquille O'Neal scores against the Los Angeles Clippers during the first quarter of an NBA basketball game in Los Angeles on Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2009.

■ The Knicks also acquired Chris Wilcox from Oklahoma City for Malik Rose and cash considerations in a swap of forwards with expiring contracts.

■ The Minnesota Timberwolves shipped Rashad McCants and center Calvin Booth to Sacramento for forward Shelden Williams and point guard Bobby Brown.

■ The Boston Celtics traded center Patrick O'Bryant to Toronto as part of a three-team trade also involving Sacramento. The Celtics acquired a future conditional second-round draft pick from the Kings, who received guard Will Solomon from Toronto and cash considerations from Boston.

The Kings also waived Mikki Moore after continuing their salary cap purge with their third trade in a week. Sacramento sent Brad Miller and John Salmons to the Bulls on Wednesday for Andres Nocioni, Drew Gooden, Michael Ruffin and Cedric Simmons. The Kings immediately sent Ruffin to Portland for Ike Diogu and cash.

Most deals were based on money, a trend that figures to resume this summer.

"The economic situation is definitely a factor right now in the NBA. It's not just the NBA, it's the country. It's the world," 76ers president Ed Stefanski said. "We're in uncharted waters here. We'll have to see how this all works out. I think it definitely had a factor in the trade deadline. We'll see what happens in the summer and free agency."

Days after commissioner David Stern said during his All-Star press conference that upcoming salary caps would decrease because of the financial crisis, the NBA sent a memo to its teams this week with specific warnings. The league said expectations for the 2009-10 and 2010-11 caps would be lower than this season's $58.68 million.

That could threaten teams who want to be players in the summer of 2010, when LeBron James is expected to lead a stellar free agent class. Before the markets collapsed, the salary cap for 2010-11 was expected to be about $63.1 million.

Now, the league predicted, it could drop to $56.5 million. That set up a trade market in which there were more sellers than buyers.

"Teams are trying to get under the cap," Knicks president Donnie Walsh said this week. "Teams are trying to lose (salary)."

Jazz rally to beat Celtics, 90-85

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—Deron Williams had 18 points and 10 assists and the Utah Jazz rallied to beat the Boston Celtics 90-85 Thursday night.

The Celtics were playing for the first time in a week and lost All-Star forward Kevin Garnett late in the second quarter with a strained right knee. Boston led by 11 in the third quarter, but couldn't hold off the Jazz at the end.

Utah outscored Boston 30-19 in the fourth quarter, closing the game on an 8-2 run to split the season series with the defending NBA champion.

Mehmet Okur led Utah with 19 points and reserve Matt Harpring had eight points and a clutch rebound as the Jazz pulled away in the final minute.

Paul Pierce led the Celtics with 20 points.

Rajon Rondo added 15 points and seven assists for Boston, which had a giant scare late in the first half when Garnett hopped to the locker room on one foot after injuring his right knee.

Garnett hurt himself while going up for an alley-oop late in the first half. He landed gingerly and motioned immediately to the bench for a substitute. He warmed up with his teammates before the second half, but the Celtics weren't going to take any chances with the superstar for a regular season game when Boston already had the best record in the Eastern Conference.

Spurs 83, Pistons 79

At Auburn Hills, Mich., Michael Curry was quite happy with the way his team defended Tim Duncan on Thursday night.

That's why the rookie Detroit Pistons coach was so impressed that Duncan finished with 18 points and 18 rebounds in San Antonio's 83-79 victory.

"It says a lot about Tim Duncan that we can say he didn't have a great game when he had 18 and 18," Curry said. "People aren't going to fully appreciate what a great player they're watching until he retires. He just goes out there and does that game after game."

Duncan had seven points and eight rebounds in the fourth quarter, helping the Spurs break a three-game road losing streak.

"Tim is the base to everything we do," San Antonio coach Gregg Popovich said. "He rebounded and he got some buckets, and that's what we needed."

Tony Parker added 19 points and 11 assists for the Spurs, who are 4-3 on an eight-game road trip.

"This was tough, but we'll take it, because we needed a win," Parker said. "We've lost a couple games that we could have won, so this gives us some confidence to try to finish this in Washington."

The Pistons dropped to 2-10 at home in the past six weeks, and face a road trip that includes games at Boston, Cleveland, New Orleans and Orlando.

Rockets trade Alston to Magic in 3-team transaction

HOUSTON (AP)—The Houston Rockets have wanted Kyle Lowry since he came out of Villanova in 2006. They finally acquired him on Thursday, and gave away veteran point guard Rafer Alston to do it.

The Rockets traded Alston to Orlando and acquired Lowry from Memphis and forward Brian Cook from the Magic on Thursday, reshaping their roster for the stretch run after Tracy McGrady announced he was out for the season.

The Magic, meanwhile, needed an experienced point guard after All-Star Jameer Nelson underwent season-ending surgery on the torn labrum in his right shoulder Thursday. Nelson suffered the injury Feb. 2 and had been contemplating rehabilitation.

Alston led Houston with 5.3 assists this season, but Rockets general manager Daryl Morey bluntly said Lowry is a better player.

"Upgrading that position was a goal going into the deadline," Morey said. "We feel likewe accomplished it. Kyle's going to be a guy this town really loves. He's a really tough competitor, up-tempo player, a winner."

Memphis also received center Adonal Foyle, guard Mike Wilks and the Magic's first-round draft pick in the deal. The Grizzlies drafted Lowry with the 24th overall pick in the 2006 draft.

Houston was eyeing Lowry then, but took Rudy Gay with the eighth overall pick. Later on draft night, the Rockets traded Gay to Memphis for Shane Battier, but couldn't get Lowry.

"We felt like he's a player who would fit well here, could really contribute" Morey said. "He's going to do exactly what Coach (Rick) Adelman tells him to do. We feel like it's a young player who can help us now and who we can build around for the future."

The 6-foot Lowry averaged 7.6 points and 3.6 assists in 49 games for the Grizzlies this season.

"He has been an important part of our team the last three seasons. With the emergence of Mike Conley, we decided that getting Orlando's unprotected first-round pick was a good move to make. We now will enter the upcoming draft with two first-round selections and three picks overall, likely inside the first 37 picks," Grizzlies general manager Chris Wallace said.

The three-team swap came one day after McGrady announced on his Web site that he'll have season-ending microfracture surgery on his troublesome left knee.

But Morey said McGrady will meet with another doctor this weekend in Chicago before having the procedure. While McGrady seems set on having microfracture surgery, Morey said the Rockets want to meet with him soon after his appointment to discuss all possible courses of treatment.

"I'm not a doctor, I don't know which one is the best one," Morey said. "I just believe in hearing all the options and then deciding."

The Rockets are 33-21, second in the Southwest Division, but sixth overall in the Western Conference. Brooks and Lowry have less than five years of NBA experience between them, but Morey said he didn't see the duo's youth as a drawback.

Morey mentioned the Boston Celtics, who won last season's NBA title with second-year pro Rajon Rondo starting at point guard.

"Basketball is about having the better player," Morey said. "This gets us a little younger. But as long as the player is an upgrade, we don't mind getting a little younger." Morey said he would let Adelman decide how to split time between Brooks and Lowry.

"We love Aaron's future and Kyle's future," Morey said. "Both those guys can be guys we build around. Aaron's played better than anyone at that spot with the starters this year. They're two guys that give us great depth at that spot."

Orlando, which is 3-3 since Nelson's injury, needed help at the position.

Nelson had the procedure performed Thursday by Dr. James Andrews in Birmingham, Ala. and the Magic said he would need an estimated four to six months of rehabilitation. Alston helps fill the void for the rest of the season.

Tiger Woods to return next week at Match Play

AP

In this photo provided by the Tiger Woods family,Sam, Elin, Tiger, Charlie Woods, from left, and their dogs Yogi, left, and Taz pose for a family photo Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009, in Orlando, Fla.

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Eight months after winning the U.S. Open on one good leg, a healthy Tiger Woods is returning to golf. Woods said on his Web site Thursday that he will defend his title next week in the Accenture Match Play Championship, believing his reconstructed left knee and his game is good enough to win.

"I'm now ready to play again, Woods said.

The Match Play Championship in Tucson, Ariz., begins Wednesday, where Woods will end his 254-day break from competition.

The timing could not be better for the PGA Tour, which has seen television ratings plunge after the world's No. 1 player had to miss the second half of the season, including two majors, the Ryder Cup and the FedEx Cup playoffs.

"We are delighted that Tiger is returning to competition and look forward to watching him compete next week," commissioner Tim Finchem said in a statement.

The last shot Woods hit was a short par putt on the 91st hole of the U.S. Open at Torrey Pines, where he defeated Rocco Mediate in a playoff to capture his 14th major, which Woods described as "probably the best ever" under the circumstances.

He had surgery after the Masters last year to repair cartilage damage in his left knee, and while preparing to return for the U.S. Open, suffered a double stress fracture in his left leg.

He limped badly over the final few days of the U.S. Open, later saying the swelling was so bad at night that he couldn't see his knee cap. A week after winning, he had reconstructive surgery, the third operation on his left knee in five years.

He began hitting short irons toward the end of December, and friends such as Mark O'Meara and John Cook said he had been playing plenty of golf over the last few weeks at his home course in Florida.

The last big obstacle to his return was the birth of his son, Charlie Axel, on Feb. 8.

"Elin and our new son Charlie are doing great," Woods wrote. "I've enjoyed my time at home with the family and appreciate everyone's support and kind wishes."

Woods will be under even greater scrutiny when he returns at Match Play, a tournament that is unpredictable even with two good legs. The eight-month break is the longest he has ever gone without playing, and there are questions of rust and how much he has modified his swing after the knee surgery.

Even so, swing coach Hank Haney said last month that Woods would not return until he thought he could win.

"He's not looking to just participate," Haney said last month.

Rodriguez ducks follow-up questions on drug use

TAMPA, Fla. (AP)—Alex Rodriguez ducked follow-up questions about his drug use, refusing to address a report identifying the cousin the Yankees star claims injected him with a banned substance.

"I'm not talking about it anymore," Rodriguez said Thursday.

The slugger also wouldn't discuss Major League Baseball's attempt to interview him about his tainted past.

"I'd rather not get into that," he said.

The three-time AL MVP met with Yankees owner George Steinbrenner and worked out on the main field at New York's spring training camp. Fans applauded and shouted encouragement, and critical shouts were at a minimum.

"The relief was just putting the uniform back on and running out there with my teammates," Rodriguez said. "No matter what happens and what has occurred in my life, the baseball field is where I feel most comfortable."

During his news conference Tuesday, he said a cousin injected him with "boli," a drug obtained in the Dominican Republic that Rodriguez believes led to a positive steroids test in baseball's anonymous 2003 survey.

Rodriguez wouldn't identify the cousin, reported by ESPN.com to be Yuri Sucart of Miami.

Property records show Sucart lives in Miami. At the house listed as his residence, a man and woman drove onto the grounds just after noon and quickly closed the gate behind them.

The man rolled down his window and did not answer questions, saying only "we have dogs." A small cocker spaniel could be seen and heard barking on the property.

The man was at the house about 15 minutes before driving off alone in the vehicle to avoid reporters waiting outside. Earlier, a woman walking on the property refused to answer questions or identify herself behind the gate when asked by The Associated Press.

Neighbors said the couple who lives there, Yuri and Carmen Sucart, are relatives of Rodriguez.

"They are very nice people, keep to themselves and don't bother anybody," said Olga Aguila, who lives next door. "We love Alex, but we know why everybody is here."

MLB officials are interested in talking to Rodriguez about the cousin and the access issue. One baseball official, speaking on condition of anonymity because public comments were not authorized, said some within MLB would like to also learn the source of the "boli" that the cousin obtained.

The players' union was contacted by the commissioner's office Wednesday, and further discussions took place Thursday on the logistics of setting up the meeting. MLB hopes the meeting will take place before Rodriguez leaves at the start of next month for the World Baseball Classic.

Union general counsel Michael Weiner said Wednesday the interview will be non-disciplinary in nature.

Yankees manager Joe Girardi said the cousin had not been given access to the team clubhouse or charter flights.

Rodriguez said he used the banned substance from 2001-03 while with Texas. There are no Rangers clubhouse entry logs from those years that would show whether his cousin was in the locker room.

Rangers family members were occasionally permitted on team flights, but not a regular basis.

Mickelson comes to life at Riviera

Northern Trust Open

LOS ANGELES (AP)—With a flop shot that was amazing even by his standards, Phil Mickelson took a step toward shaking off his slump with a career-best 8-under 63 at Riviera and the lead in the Northern Trust Open on Thursday.

From 40 yards behind the 10th green and his ball buried in the rough, Mickelson barely cleared the bunker and settled 6 feet from the hole to start his day with a birdie.

The round sent him to a one-shot lead, which Mickelson desperately needed after one of the worst starts to his career.

"It was one of the better shots I've hit this year," he said.

That's not saying much considering this was the first time he has broken 70 on the U.S. West Coast, where Mickelson has compiled 16 of his 34 victories on the U.S. PGA Tour.

The rest of his game also was sharp. The misses weren't nearly as wild, the putts dropped far more frequently and Mickelson picked up confidence with each of his eight birdies on a gorgeous morning off Sunset Boulevard.

"There's three more rounds to go," he said. "But I feel like I'm back on track."

Scott McCarron birdied his last hole for a 64 to give himself another chance at a tournament where he has twice played in the final group without winning.

The group at 66 included Pebble Beach winner Dustin Johnson, Jim Furyk, K.J. Choi and Luke Donald.

Riviera was in immaculate shape, and with ideal scoring conditions, 52 players shots in the 60s. That included Fred Couples and former Ryder Cup captain Paul Azinger at 67.

Mickelson is the defending champion at the Northern Trust Open and wildly popular in these parts, and he had a sizable gallery.

The photographers, though, belonged to 17-year-old Ryo Ishikawa.

The Japanese sensation made his tour debut before about 100 members of the Japanese media, along with a dozen or so other media curious about the "Shy Prince" who made history at age 15 by winning on the Japan Golf Tour.

He opened with two-putt birdie on the par-5 first hole before running into problems with his putter, and he wound up with a 73. Ishikawa missed one par putt from 4 feet, and three-putted from 5 feet for a double bogey on the seventh.

"I had been nervous for 18 holes," he said. "I feel like my body has been stiff all day."

Stuart Appleby was on the putting green, looking down on the 18th at Ishikawa saving par from the side of the hill and a circle of cameras around him.

"This is like the 'Truman Show,'" he said.

The other tour debut belonged to Vincent Johnson, playing on the Charlie Sifford Exemption that is awarded to a player who represents the advancement of diversity in golf.

He birdied his first hole with a wedge to tap-in range on the tricky 10th hole and calmed his nerves while shooting 70.

"That set the tone for the day," Johnson said. "I said to myself, 'I can do this.'"

He also was one of the few players to ever drive onto the 12th green, although Johnson was teeing off on No. 11. His ball caught a tree and landed on the adjacent green.

"It was a little embarrassing," he said. "But then I hit a 4-iron into the trees, punched out short and got my par. I knew if I had anything around par, I would be playing decent."

Mickelson hasn't been too far away from par in his first three starts on the West Coast, where he has had at least one top 10 every year since his first full season in 1993. He missed the cut in Phoenix, tied for 42nd at San Diego at 2-over 290, and had to birdie the last hole at Pebble Beach to make the cut at 2-under par.

He went through five buckets of balls on the range at Pebble Beach in the rain on Sunday, had three good days of practice, went back to the old shafts in his irons and eliminated the mistakes that had been dragging him down.

"When you don't play well, you're not going to rest until you get back on track," Mickelson said. "Today's score, it was obviously a good round, but I didn't feel that I played immaculate. I still feel a thought it's coming. The reason why the score was so low is I ended up making some putts, and I holed a chip, and I got up-and-down on every green that I missed, which is helpful."

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	44	11	.800	–
Philadelphia	27	26	.509	16
New Jersey	24	31	.436	20
New York	22	31	.415	21
Toronto	21	35	.375	23 1/2

Central Division

Cleveland	41	11	.788	–
Detroit	27	26	.509	14 1/2
Milwaukee	27	30	.474	16 1/2
Chicago	24	30	.444	18
Indiana	22	34	.393	21

Southeast Division

Orlando	39	14	.736	–
Atlanta	32	22	.593	7 1/2
Miami	28	25	.528	11
Charlotte	22	32	.407	17 1/2
Washington	12	42	.222	27 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

San Antonio	36	17	.679	–
New Orleans	32	20	.615	3 1/2
Houston	33	21	.611	3 1/2
Dallas	32	21	.604	4
Memphis	15	39	.278	21 1/2

Northwest Division

Denver	37	17	.685	–
Portland	33	20	.623	3 1/2
Utah	31	23	.574	6
Minnesota	18	35	.340	18 1/2
Oklahoma City	13	41	.241	24

Pacific Division

LA Lakers	44	10	.815	–
Phoenix	30	23	.566	13 1/2
Golden State	19	36	.345	25 1/2
LA Clippers	13	42	.236	31 1/2
Sacramento	11	44	.200	33 1/2

Yesterday's Games
Utah 90, Boston 85
San Antonio 83, Detroit 79

NORTHERN TRUST OPEN SCORES

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Scores Thursday from the Northern Trust Open, a $6.3 million US PGA Tour event at 7,298-yard, par-71 (35-36) Riviera Country Club: Partial First Round

Note: Play suspended due to darkness with four golfers still on the course:

FIRST ROUND

Phil Mickelson	31-32—63
Scott McCarron	31-33—64
Dean Wilson	30-36—66
Jim Furyk	33-33—66
Dustin Johnson	34-32—66
Luke Donald	32-34—66
Andres Romero	32-34—66
K.J. Choi	32-34—66
John Merrick	34-32—66
Fred Couples	34-33—67
Brandt Snedeker	33-34—67
Kevin Na	32-35—67
Tommy Armour III	34-33—67
Jeff Klauk	32-35—67
Ryuji Imada	34-33—67
D.J. Trahan	33-34—67
Todd Hamilton	33-34—67
Kirk Triplett	32-35—67
Briny Baird	32-35—67
Paul Azinger	31-36—67
Tim Clark	32-36—68
Brandt Jobe	32-36—68
Steve Elkington	31-37—68
Ben Curtis	34-34—68
Retief Goosen	33-35—68
Charley Hoffman	31-37—68
Chris DiMarco	31-37—68
Woody Austin	33-35—68
Bo Van Pelt	33-35—68
Ryan Moore	34-34—68
Rich Beem	33-35—68
Geoff Ogilvy	33-35—68
Carl Pettersson	34-34—68
Steve Stricker	34-34—68
Rory Sabbatini	33-35—68
Jason Gore	35-34—69
Jeev M. Singh	34-35—69
Hunter Mahan	34-35—69
Brian Bateman	33-36—69
Will MacKenzie	34-35—69
Bubba Watson	35-34—69
Michael Allen	33-36—69
Bill Haas	34-35—69
Oliver Wilson	33-36—69
Brendon de Jonge	33-36—69
Pat Perez	35-34—69
Chez Reavie	34-35—69
Marc Turnesa	35-34—69
Brian Davis	34-35—69
Jeff Quinney	33-36—69
Jimmy Walker	35-34—69
Shigeki Maruyama	36-34—70
Peter Lonard	36-34—70
Brad Adamonis	32-38—70
Kenny Perry	37-33—70
Mike Weir	34-36—70
Trevor Immelman	33-37—70
Robert Allenby	33-37—70
Mark Calcavecchia	34-36—70
Johnson Wagner	37-33—70
Jonathan Byrd	34-36—70
Vaughn Taylor	35-35—70
Soren Hansen	33-37—70
Vincent Johnson	34-36—70
Matt Kuchar	35-35—70
Michael Letzig	34-36—70
John Rollins	35-35—70
Graeme McDowell	35-35—70
John Mallinger	35-35—70
Charlie Wi	35-35—70
Justin Leonard	34-36—70
Brian Gay	36-34—70
Cameron Beckman	35-35—70
Joe Ogilvie	34-36—70
Richard S. Johnson	35-35—70
Rocco Mediate	34-36—70
David Duval	33-37—70
Nicholas Thompson	35-36—71
Stuart Appleby	35-36—71
Nick Watney	34-37—71
Troy Matteson	36-35—71
Jeff Maggert	37-34—71
Tim Wilkinson	35-36—71
Nick O'Hern	35-36—71
Ernie Els	35-36—71
Stephen Ames	35-36—71
George McNeill	35-36—71
Scott Verplank	35-36—71
Steve Lowery	35-36—71
Aaron Baddeley	32-39—71
Mathew Goggin	34-37—71
John Senden	37-34—71
Steve Pate	36-35—71
Heath Slocum	37-35—72
Ben Crane	35-37—72
Martin Laird	36-36—72
Padraig Harrington	34-38—72
Mark Wilson	36-36—72
Jerry Kelly	34-38—72
Cliff Kresge	36-36—72
Tom Pernice, Jr.	36-36—72
David Berganio, Jr.	34-38—72
Bryce Molder	35-37—72
Vijay Singh	35-37—72
Chad Campbell	35-37—72
Charles Howell III	34-38—72
Angel Cabrera	35-37—72
Eric Axley	37-35—72
Bob Estes	33-39—72
Kevin Sutherland	36-36—72
Ken Duke	37-36—73
Nathan Green	35-38—73
Zach Johnson	35-38—73
Steve Flesch	38-35—73
J.B. Holmes	36-37—73
Steve Marino	35-38—73
Jin Park	36-37—73
Ryo Ishikawa	38-35—73
Harrison Frazar	36-37—73
Jason Bohn	35-38—73
Tim Herron	36-37—73
Daniel Chopra	34-39—73
Corey Pavin	36-37—73
Lucas Glover	36-37—73
Ricky Barnes	37-36—73
Ryan Palmer	39-35—74
Bart Bryant	32-42—74
J.J. Henry	35-39—74
Jeff Overton	35-40—75
Tim Petrovic	38-37—75
Alex Cejka	35-40—75
Kevin Streelman	38-37—75
Parker McLachlin	38-37—75
David Morland IV	37-38—75
Matt Bettencourt	36-40—76
Tom Lehman	37-39—76
Billy Mayfair	38-38—76
James Nitties	32-44—76
Brad Faxon	39-38—77
Jim Gormley	41-38—79

Did Not Finish
Bill Lunde
Chris Stroud
Mark Brooks
Kevin Chappell

LEADERBOARD

	SCORE	THRU
1. Phil Mickelson	-8	F
2. Scott McCarron	-7	F
3. Dean Wilson	-5	F
3. Jim Furyk	-5	F
3. Dustin Johnson	-5	F
3. Luke Donald	-5	F
3. Andres Romero	-5	F
3. K.J. Choi	-5	F
3. John Merrick	-5	F
10. Fred Couples	-4	F
10. Brandt Snedeker	-4	F
10. Kevin Na	-4	F
10. Tommy Armour III	-4	F
10. Jeff Klauk	-4	F
10. Ryuji Imada	-4	F
10. D.J. Trahan	-4	F
10. Todd Hamilton	-4	F
10. Kirk Triplett	-4	F
10. Briny Baird	-4	F
10. Paul Azinger	-4	F

By The Associated Press

Seman rules February edition of CWGA monthly

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Participants of last weekend's CNMI Women's Golf Association February Tournament pose after Feb. 15's competition at the Coral Ocean Point Golf Resort.

Bennet Seman won her first title of the year in a memorable Valentine's Day at the fairways.

Seman submitted the lowest net score of 67 to rule the February edition of the 2009 CNMI Women's Golf Association February Tournament last Saturday, Feb. 14, at the Coral Ocean Point Golf Resort.

Playing with a USGA handicap of 26, Seman's gross score could have been lower if not for several miscues at the turn.

After she joined two other players with one of the lowest scores of 43 in the first nine holes, she then slowed down with a 50 in the back nine for a gross score of 93, but it was more than enough to win the title.

With her sterling performance, Seman earned 15 points as she also improved her fifth place finish last previous month when she fired a net score of 75.

Terry Tudela, who was seventh with a 78 in the January edition of the tee off, settled for second five shots behind with net score of 72.

Tudela, who has an 18 handicap, came in with a gross score of 90, including 43 in the front and 47 in the back. She earned 14 points.

Lou Kim managed third place with a net of 73 as the 16-handicapper checked in with 37-38 for a gross of 75 that gave her 13 points.

Noriko Togawa, who was third in the previous tournament with her net 74, slipped to fourth place this time with another 74 as the one-handicapper shot the lowest score in the first nine holes with a 37 as well as the lowest in the final nine holes of 38 for a gross of 75. She earned 12 points.

Her daughter Yuko Togawa, who was second in January with a net 73, earned 11 points as she fell to fifth this month with her net 78 after the five-handicapper recorded a 42-41 for a gross of 83.

Masayo Miyamoto and Terue Ukita have similar net scores of 78 to finish sixth and seventh place, respectivelt. The 12-handicapper Miyamoto had the lower gross of 90 (48-42) as against the 23-handicapper Ukita's 101 (51-50). They got 10 and nine points, respectively.

January champion Shiori Onoue topped two other players with a net of 79 to occupy the eighth position.

Onoue, the seven-handicapper who shot a net 72 last month, came up with 41-45 for a gross of 86.

Chang Eun Ae settled for ninth with a net 79 to rise from 16th place in her previous tournament when she settled with a net 83.

Kung A Yang also submitted net 79 to complete the Top 10.

Other participants of last weekend's tourney, with their net scores in parenthesis, were Kimiko Abe (81), Lorraine Babauta (82), Seo Kyung Ran (85), and Xiao L Wang (86).

A total of 18 players joined the February tournament, including four who have lower net scores but failed to submit the required score card requirement for handicap posting.

They were Sherlyn Jones (76), Matilde Hocog (76), Pil Kitami (77), and Sachiko Adachi (75).

70 RIDERS

From Page 28

second overall to 2008 champion Joseph Husslein, will also be coming for the race.

"I would like to race for fun only if the race organizers can do it on their own. It's just for my training preparation for this coming end of month race in the Philippines. I would say maybe five or seven more riders are coming," Garcia said.

However, he said that Husslein is not joining the Saipan stage because he is on his way to a business trip off-island.

Chiyo Lombard, the defending women's overall champion, will also not be able to compete on Saipan because of work commitments.

"But for sure they will be joining the Guam stages that will be held on March 14 and 15," Garcia said.

This year's race is sponsored TakeCare.

Other businesses on Saipan sponsoring the tour include Hard Rock Café, DFS Galleria, Saipan Grand Hotel, LBT Appraisal, Foamacon Liner, Fiesta Resort and Spa, Saipan Shipping, Bank-Pacific, Coco Restaurant, Tan Holdings Corp., Pacific Islands Club, Pacific Traders Insurance, and Auto Glass Pro.

Stage 1 will be the individual time trial on Saturday, Feb. 21, with cyclists covering a distance of 7.5 kilometers from the Marinas Country Club to the Suicide Cliff (Hill Top) for both male and female participants.

There will be six age-group categories to be contested in each of the three divisions—Expert Division, Novice Division, and Mountain Bike Division. These are Junior (17 and below), Open (18-29), Submaster (30-39), Master (40-49), Senior (50-59) and Grandmaster (60 and above).

Stage 2 will be the road race on Sunday, Feb. 22, with a distance of 67 km for the expert and 33.5 km for novice and mountain bike.

Stage 3 will be the road race on March 14 with the starting and finishing line to be located at the Ace Hardware Yigo via the main thoroughfares of Guam.

Competitors for the expert division will cover a distance of 76 km, while 52 km for the novice, and 26 km for the mountain bike.

Stage 4 will feature the road race on hills and flats on March 14 with the starting and finishing line to be located at the Agana Shopping Center.

The distance for the expert would be 60 km, while the novice and the mountain bike will be 34 km.

The proceeds will be for the benefit of the Jazy Garcia Sports Foundation.

LEBRIA

From Page 28

in runs scored with 17, Bert Camacho and Kuki Pangelinan had 16, followed by Antonette Laniyo and Liz Lebria with 14, Joyce Taro with 13, Pauline Camacho with 11, and Lenice Kapileo with 11.

In doubles, Lilian Pangelinan, Felisa Brel, Kuki Pangelinan, Pauline Camacho, Jenny Palacios, and Evelyn Kani have two each.

More players hit triples with Kuki Pangelinan, Pauline Tudela with four apiece, Evelyn Kani with three, Julie Guerrero, Lilian Pangelinan, Doloina Panuelo with two, and 17 players tied for one each.

Four players have so far scored two homeruns, namely Bert Camacho, Liz Lebria, Angie Ngirbedul, and Kuki Pangelinan.

Those who have a homerun, meanwhile, are Marissa Guerrero, Charlene Cabrera, Pauline Tudela, Edwina Baulechong, Polly Omechelang, and Joyce Taro.

Angie Ngirbedul is the current leader in RBIs with 16, followed by Kuki Pangelinan with 15, Lilian Pangelinan and Dolorina Panuelo with 14, Joyce Taro with 12, Antonette Laniyo with 12, and Pauline Tudela and Edwina Baulechong with 10 apiece.

NMC's Polly Omechelang is second in pitching with a 4.26 ERA and her teammate Felisa Brel is third with her 4.74 ERA.

Dolorina Panuelo of CUC is in fourth place with her 5.29 ERA, followed by Eula Matsumoto of DCCA with her 7.34 and Meng Yamada with her 9.65.

Matsumoto is currently leading in strikeouts with 29 with Panuelo (22), Bego Camacho (17), Yamada (12), Omechelang (10), and Brel (9) next.

FIL-AM

From Page 28

only the highest series will be counted for determining the top three bowlers for the stepladder finals. Actual handicap will be added to each bowler's score.

Based on the tournament rules, only bowlers with average based on 12 games in any league can join the tournament. The official list compiled based on completed or ongoing SBA/PBA leagues shall be the basis for classification.

Bowlers with less than 12 games can play, but only under Class A. For unlisted bowlers, established average based on 12 or more games in any league may be used.

Classification of bowlers is based on averages as follows: Class A, 170 and over; Class B, 155 to 169; Class C, 154 and below.

Participants are grouped in particular lanes by classification and they will move to a different pair of lanes for every game.

The Top 3 bowlers from each class will be determined base on the total score for the three-game series.

The championship will be a stepladder format: semifinal (No. 2 vs. No. 3), and the winner will bowl against No. 1 for the championship in a knockout game.

For more information, interested participants can contact Ador Dimaano, Gigi Zapanta, Robert Talavera, or any member of the Saipan Fil-American Lions Club.

Shaq, other big names stay put on deadline day

Shaquille O'Neal and all the other big names stayed put on trade deadline day, with owners perhaps scared of making moves that added salary in an uncertain economic climate. 25

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Tiger Woods to return next week at Match Play

Eight months after winning the U.S. Open on one good leg, a healthy Tiger Woods is returning to golf. 26

White urges athletes to keep competing

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association president Michael White encouraged athletes to keep on competing no matter what the odds are in a message delivered at the 2008 NMASA Annual Sports Banquet Thursday night at the Seaside Hall of Saipan Grand Hotel.

"Never give up. Keep on competing for yourselves, your family, your teammates, and your Commonwealth," White said.

"It is through sports competitions that we can attain good health and better well-being," he added.

White acknowledged that in this time of crisis, it will be hard for athletes to compete, especially in off-island tournaments. But he said this should not dampen their spirits, as sports leaders will try to find ways to make athletes compete and continue improving their skills.

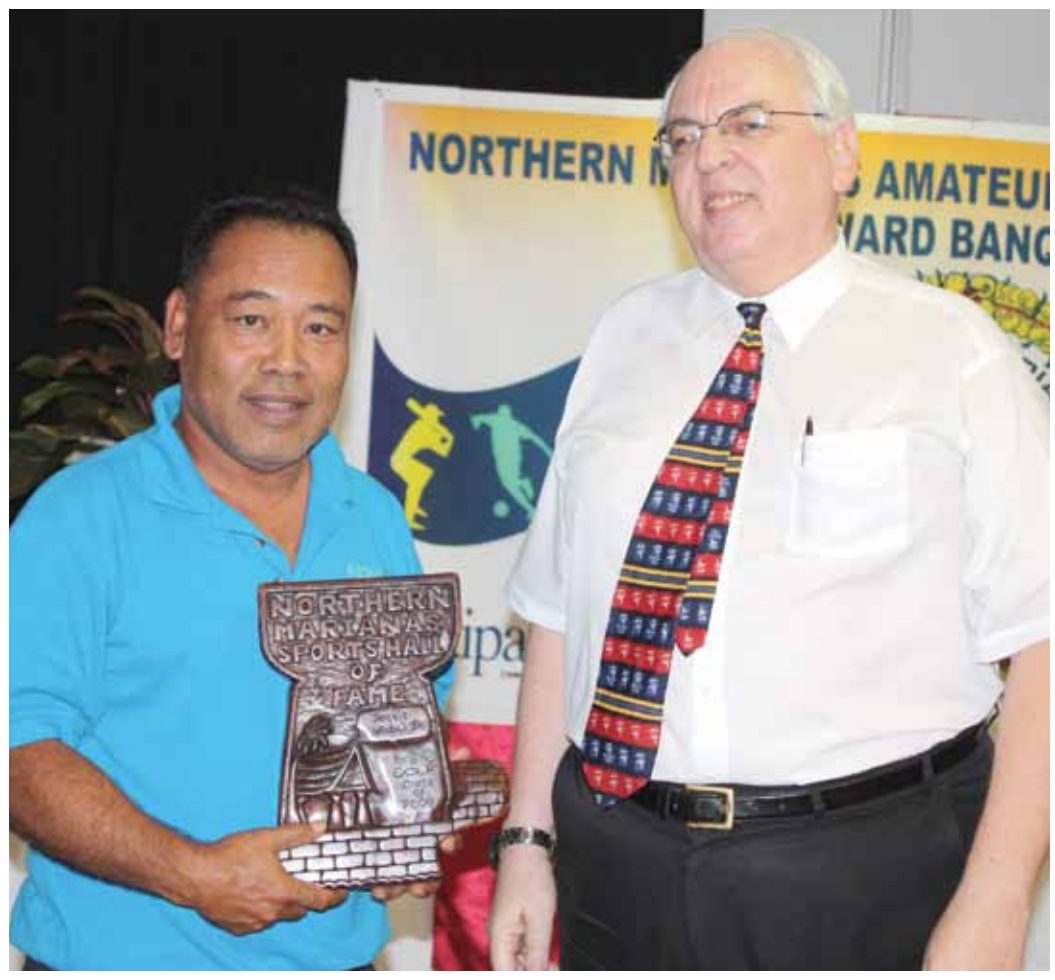
"Our sports leaders will do their very best to get help from the community to make sure our athletes can compete against some of the best in the region," said White. "Parents and family members will also be there to help our athletes. Individuals and companies are there, too, as their continued support is vital to the success of our athletes and the CNMI sports," the NMASA president added.

After his inspirational thoughts, White through the assistance of NMASA vice president Jeff Race and secretary Rose Igitol proceeded with the main agenda for the night—the recognition of top athletes and coaches of last season.

Named Athletes of the Year were swimmer Rezne Wong and sprinter Yvonne Bennett, while voted Student Athletes of the Year were Marianas High School's Jericho Cruz and Jacque Wonenberg.

Athletics and basketball's Elias Rangamar was selected Coach of the Year, while golfer Jess Wabol was inducted to the CNMI Sports Hall of Fame.

NMASA also cited athletes and student athletes of the month. The list included Ji Hoon Heo, Eli Torgeson, Tyce Mister, Jack Kabiriel, Nicky San Nicolas, Sarah Johnson, Marystar Welch, Grace Kimball, Mieko Carey, Maimi Shimizu, Maimi Oshima-Berger, Becca Newman, Rafael Jones, Kai Staal, Christian Miller, Trevor Ogumoro, Kensuke Kimura, Caleb Arriola, Raphael Zapanta, Abigail Martinsen, Lia Rangamar, Angel Marie Tan, Thea Minor, and Roxanne Duenas.



NMASA president Michael White, right, poses with CNMI Sports Hall of Fame inductee Jess Wabol during the 2008 NMASA Annual Sports Banquet held Thursday night at the Seaside Hall of Saipan Grand Hotel.
ROSELYN B. MONROYO

70 riders on Saipan to join Jazy Cup

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Organizers are anticipating between 60-70 riders from Saipan to participate in the 8th Annual Jazy Cup Tour De Marianas this weekend.

This according to Ronald Villafria, who was designated by organizer Jazy Garcia to coordinate the Saipan stages of the race.

Included in that number will be most of the 40 members of the Saipan Cyclers.

Villafria said regular competitors from Northern Mariana Islands Triathlon Federation would also be joining the race.

Garcia confirmed in an email message yesterday that there will be five to seven riders who will be arriving from Guam, including him and wife Mylene.

Bobby Mandapat, who placed

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Between 60-70 riders from Saipan are expected to participate in the 8th Annual Jazy Cup Tour De Marianas this weekend.

Lebria, Camacho lead stats in women's softball

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Teammates Liz Lebria and Bego Camacho are leading the individual statistics in the women's division of the ongoing 2008-2009 Budweiser Inter-Government/Business Slow-pitch Softball League.

Lebria, who plays for Finance, averaged .679 after hitting 19-for-28 to emerge to lead the batting category.

On the other hand, Camacho compiled an earned run average of 2.69 in eight games she pitched. In 52 innings she allowed only 69 runs and 95 hits. She is also tied in fifth to sixth in batting with Joyce Taro of current league-leader Northern Marianas College as the two averaged .565 (13-for-23).

Finance is currently in second place with a 5-4 win-loss record behind NMC's 9-2 slate. Three other Finance player are in the Top 15 in batting.

Doris Rangamar of Department of Community and Cultural Affairs hit 14-for21 for a .667 average to currently occupy the No. 2 spot, while teammate Bert Camacho is third with a .655 (19-for-29) norm.

DCCA, the defending champion, is currently groping for form with its 4-5 card, good for only fourth place.

Evelyn Kani of cellar dweller Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (1-8) was running fourth in batting as of Feb. 9 with her .652 (15-for-23).

Completing the Top 10 are No. 8 Mercelyn Santos of CHC with her .555 (10-for-18), No. 9 Dolorina Panuelo of CUC with her .545 (12-for-22), and No. 10 Lilian Pangelinan of Finance with her .538 (14-for-26).

The others in the Magic 15 include No. 11 Kuki Pangelinan of NMC with her .529 (18-for-34), No. 12 Lenice Kapileo of Finance with her .519 (14-for-27), No. 13 Lilian Aguon with her .519 (14-for-27), No. 14 Antonette Laniyo of DCCA with her .500 (15-for-30), and No. 15 Edwina Baulechong of NMC with her .550 (17-for-34).

Felisa Brel is the leader

See LEBRIA on Page 27

Fil-Am Lions Club fundraising bowling this weekend

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

The Saipan Filipino-American Lions Club will hold its fundraising classified bowling tournament this weekend at the Saipan Bowling Center with guaranteed prizes of $300 each for the champions in Class A, B and C.

The tournament is jointly sponsored by Tan Holdings Corp., JET Holdings, Micronesian Brokers, Inc., Eli Arago, Lina Dimaano, Jess Delos Santos, and A&L Corporation.

The event will begin with the three-game roll-off at 6:30pm today, Feb. 21, and it will resume at 12:30pm tomorrow, Feb. 22.

The stepladder finals will be held on the last day of the two-day event after the three-game roll-off is completed.

Bowlers have the option to bowl on the first day or the second day, or on both days, but

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